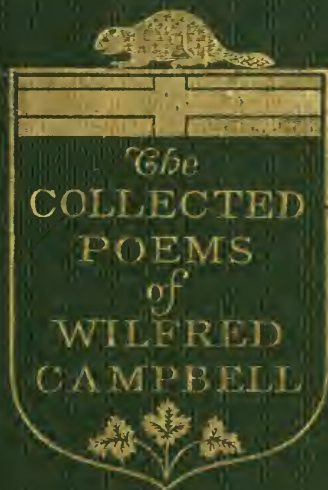


ERINDALE COLLEGE



3 1761 02803 2555



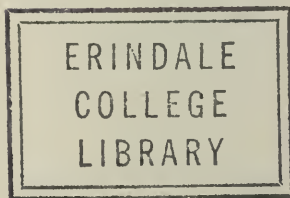
MAR 25 1997

THE POEMS OF
WILFRED
CAMPBELL



TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS
1905

Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year one
thousand nine hundred and five, by WILLIAM BRIGGS, at the office
of the Minister of Agriculture.



PREFACE

THE verse in this collection is all, not dramatic in form, which the author cares to preserve, and much of it is selected from the several volumes which he has published.

There is, however, a very large portion of it new verse, either now published for the first time or which has seen the light only in some of the magazines of Britain and America. Much of the verse included has been published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Century*, *Harper's*, *Scribner's*, *The London Spectator* and other periodicals prominent in the English-speaking world.

The poetical tragedies and dramas, "Mordred," "Hildebrand," "The Brockenfiend," "Robespierre," "Daulac," "Morning," "Sanio" and the "Admiral's Daughter," will, the most of them, be included in a companion volume, to be published later. Meanwhile, this volume of lyrical verse is respectfully presented to the British and American public.

NEW EDINBURGH, OTTAWA,
November, 1905.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
University of Toronto

INTRODUCTION

SIMPLICITY and directness are essential to the highest class of verse. In the judgment of poetry this principle must never be lost sight of.

Goethe, perhaps the greatest literary mind since Shakespeare, is noted for his simplicity and directness of manner. The effort to dwarf the writing of verse into an obscure cult will fail so long as the people keep themselves familiar with the verse of the great poets of the past—whose work is true and beautiful because of its very character of direct simple naturalness.

It may be difficult to explain to the layman the conditions which produce poetry. But no one of a poetical temperament (and I believe that the greater mass of readers have such an inclination) can fail to appreciate a true poem. The failure to appreciate verse to-day is not owing so much to the inability of the public to recognize a poem, as to the attempt of certain critics to force upon the world as poetry what is after all at the most only clever verse. The result is a confusion in the mind of the ordinary reader who in the past was accustomed to judge by his own feelings.

There is no doubt that poetry is first and last a high

emotion. It is a sort of instrument which thrills the soul not only by what it reveals but what it suggests. For this reason, a mere esthetic word-picture, no matter how carefully wrought, is not in the true sense poetry.

It may emulate the careful photograph, which seemingly loses nothing yet fails to catch the one necessary insight which the painter who is a genius puts into his picture—that light that never was on sea or land, yet which all men see sometime or other in what the average world may call the dull and commonplace. There may be a danger, however, that a cult to see beauty in the commonplace will grow from the affectation to seem artistic and poetical. After all, the beauty we see in a special verse is in ourselves. There is the universal beauty which all see. That is the real, the lasting beauty. There is the greatness of life as life, the greatness inherent in noble actions and noble aims; the pathos of a great love, a great self-denial or a great despair. There is the greatness of a struggle for a lost cause (how mankind loves a lost cause!) There is a majesty of life and death; the majesty of ocean and shore and lofty hills. All of this is universal, and of this poetry is made.

After all, the real root of all poetry from Shakespeare to the latest singer is in the human heart. The mind is cold and critical. It plans and plots. It examines and sifts. Man with the mind alone were but a mean creature. Man the planner and plotter, the schemer and builder, may move mountains and yet be little better than the ape. It is man the hoper, man the

dreamer, the eternal child of delight and despair whose ideals and desires are ever a lifetime ahead of his greatest accomplishments, who is the hero of nature and the darling of the ages. Because of this, true poetry will always be to him a language, speaking to him from the highest levels of his being and a translation from a more divine tongue emanating from the mystery and will of God.

Poetry may have many messages; but above all stands the eternal appeal from life and nature. All description of water and land, sky and earth, summer and winter, is not necessarily poetry, any more than are all verses on life and death and love and despair. But the greatest poetry is that dealing with the human soul. The highest class of poetry, that of Shakespeare, that of the Old Testament, of Goethe, is that dealing with the eternal tragedy of life in the universe. The eternal theme of man is man. But all poetry may not stand on this high level. There are lesser degrees of the divine emotion, and much that is true, beautiful and majestic in the verse of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In the work of the great nature poets, the very strength and beauty of the verse is owing to the fact that the thought and imagination dwell upon the human, and nature as affecting the human, rather than upon the mere objective nature, as solely an esthetic aspect. The greatness of such verse consists in its lofty emotion, whereby it conveys to the soul an impressive sense of the majesty of life and death. It is not merely the work

of the literary artist, who paints in words on a sort of literary canvas; but whether the idea be death or a season, the mood is a creation of a soul strongly imbued with a feeling of the sublimity of life. In such verse one is lifted out of the common into an atmosphere of spiritual exaltation such as only true poetry has the power to create.

In dealing with a volume of verse, it is perfectly right that the reader should be guided only by the highest standards in the selection or rejection of poetry as such. To find the true poetry needs no subtle insight into the intricacies of language and the laws of prosody. The soul of the man of pure sentiment and cultured mind is at once influenced by true poetry through those very impressive qualities which mark it out from the body of mere rhyme or unrhymed effusions and literary exercises with which, even in the volumes of our noblest poets, it is sometimes mingled.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
A DEDICATION - - - - -	15
ELEMENTAL AND HUMAN VERSE—	
Poetry - - - - -	19
My Library - - - - -	21
Lines on a Skeleton - - - - -	21
The Soul's Bath - - - - -	23
The Discoverers - - - - -	24
The Hills and the Sea - - - - -	29
The Vanguard - - - - -	30
Commemoration Ode - - - - -	35
The Dreamers - - - - -	39
The Lyre Degenerate - - - - -	42
Work - - - - -	45
The Blind Caravan - - - - -	46
Ode to the Laurentian Hills - - - - -	48
The Art Divine - - - - -	49
Day and Night - - - - -	50
My Creed - - - - -	50
Responsibility - - - - -	51
Sleep - - - - -	51
Sleep - - - - -	52
The Question - - - - -	53
The House of Dreams - - - - -	57
Soul - - - - -	58
Life-Spent - - - - -	64
A Present-Day Creed - - - - -	65
Truth - - - - -	65
The Singer - - - - -	66

ELEMENTAL AND HUMAN VERSE—*Continued.*

PAGE

The Heart of Song	-	-	-	-	-	67
Genius	-	-	-	-	-	68
The Last Prayer	-	-	-	-	-	70
Unabsolved	-	-	-	-	-	72
Return No More !	-	-	-	-	-	80
The Lyre of the Gods	-	-	-	-	-	81
The Soul's House	-	-	-	-	-	83
Orpheus	-	-	-	-	-	85
Glen Eila	-	-	-	-	-	86
The Betrayed Singer	-	-	-	-	-	89

NATURE VERSE—

Nature	-	-	-	-	-	93
The Home of Song	-	-	-	-	-	93
Higher Kinship	-	-	-	-	-	95
Wind	-	-	-	-	-	96
Earth	-	-	-	-	-	98
Snow	-	-	-	-	-	99
Snowfall	-	-	-	-	-	101
The Dryad's House	-	-	-	-	-	101
August	-	-	-	-	-	103
Cape Eternity	-	-	-	-	-	103
The Mystery	-	-	-	-	-	104
Spring	-	-	-	-	-	105
In the Spring Fields	-	-	-	-	-	108
Renewal	-	-	-	-	-	108
The Dryad	-	-	-	-	-	109
A Northern River	-	-	-	-	-	112
The Humming Bee	-	-	-	-	-	114
A Wood Lyric	-	-	-	-	-	116
An August Reverie	-	-	-	-	-	117
To the Ottawa	-	-	-	-	-	120
Glory of the Dying Day	-	-	-	-	-	120
Walls of Green	-	-	-	-	-	122
Ode to Silence	-	-	-	-	-	123
Ode to Thunder Cape	-	-	-	-	-	125

CONTENTS

xi

NATURE VERSE—*Continued.*

	PAGE
To the Rideau River - - - - -	127
The Wind-Dancer - - - - -	129
Winter - - - - -	130
The Spring-Spirit - - - - -	132
In the Strength of the Trees - - - - -	133
Autumn - - - - -	134
The Journey - - - - -	136
The Message of Night - - - - -	137
The Dream Divine - - - - -	138
Titan - - - - -	139
Morning - - - - -	142
The Earth-Spirit - - - - -	142
Rododactulos - - - - -	143
The End of the Furrow - - - - -	143
The Pageantry of Death - - - - -	144
An October Evening - - - - -	146
To the Blackberry - - - - -	147
Before the Dawn - - - - -	149
A Winter's Night - - - - -	149
Dawn in the June Woods - - - - -	150
September in the Laurentian Hills - - - - -	151
Indian Summer - - - - -	152
Song - - - - -	152
Autumn Leaves - - - - -	153

ELEGIAC AND MEMORIAL VERSE—

Victoria - - - - -	157
The Dead Poet - - - - -	162
Summer Death - - - - -	165
Sebastian Cabot - - - - -	172
Bereavement of the Fields - - - - -	176
Nicholas Flood Davin - - - - -	179
Henry A. Harper - - - - -	181
The Dead Leader - - - - -	183
Alexander Lumsden - - - - -	185

POEMS OF THE AFFECTIONS—

PAGE

Beyond the Hills of Dream	-	-	-	-	189
Love	-	-	-	-	192
Afterglow	-	-	-	-	192
Out of Pompeii	-	-	-	-	193
Harvest Slumber Song	-	-	-	-	194
The Mother	-	-	-	-	195
On a Summer Shore	-	-	-	-	199
Belated	-	-	-	-	200
Departure	-	-	-	-	202
Her Look	-	-	-	-	204

DRAMATIC, CLASSICAL AND IMAGINATIVE VERSE—

The Last Scene from "Mordred"	-	-	-	-	207
Pan the Fallen	-	-	-	-	210
Phaethon	-	-	-	-	212
Sir Lancelot	-	-	-	-	219
The Wayfarer	-	-	-	-	225
Peniel	-	-	-	-	230
Cain	-	-	-	-	236
Lazarus	-	-	-	-	238
Ahmet	-	-	-	-	241
The Elf-Lover	-	-	-	-	249
The Were-Wolves	-	-	-	-	251
The Vengeance of Saki	-	-	-	-	254
The Last Ride	-	-	-	-	261
The Violin	-	-	-	-	265
Songs from "Mordred"	-	-	-	-	267

SONNETS—

Our Heritage	-	-	-	-	273
The Builders	-	-	-	-	273
The Higher Kinship	-	-	-	-	274
Nature the Benign	-	-	-	-	274
The Soul	-	-	-	-	275
My Religion	-	-	-	-	275
Toleration	-	-	-	-	276

CONTENTS

xiii

SONNETS—*Continued.*

PAGE

September -	-	-	-	-	-	-	276
Nature Truth	-	-	-	-	-	-	277
The Truth -	-	-	-	-	-	-	277
Life's Inferno	-	-	-	-	-	-	278
Death	-	-	-	-	-	-	278
The Consolation of the Stars	-	-	-	-	-	-	279
True Insight	-	-	-	-	-	-	279
The House Divine -	-	-	-	-	-	-	280
"Not Unto Endless Dark"	-	-	-	-	-	-	280
The Wind's Royalty	-	-	-	-	-	-	281
Nature's Sincerity	-	-	-	-	-	-	281
The Soul's Cloister	-	-	-	-	-	-	282
Earth's Innocence	-	-	-	-	-	-	282
Love	-	-	-	-	-	-	283
Foundations	-	-	-	-	-	-	283
The Poet	-	-	-	-	-	-	284
The Politician	-	-	-	-	-	-	284
Sublimity	-	-	-	-	-	-	285
The Patriot	-	-	-	-	-	-	285
Night	-	-	-	-	-	-	286
Job -	-	-	-	-	-	-	286
On a Picture of Columbus	-	-	-	-	-	-	287
Shelley	-	-	-	-	-	-	288

THE SAGAS OF VASTER BRITAIN—

Britain	-	-	-	-	-	-	291
Canada	-	-	-	-	-	-	291
To the Canadian Patriot	-	-	-	-	-	-	293
To the United States	-	-	-	-	-	-	294
Responsibility	-	-	-	-	-	-	295
The Race	-	-	-	-	-	-	296
The Answer	-	-	-	-	-	-	296
England	-	-	-	-	-	-	297
The World-Mother (Scotland)	-	-	-	-	-	-	299
The Lazarus of Empire	-	-	-	-	-	-	303
Show the Way, England	-	-	-	-	-	-	305

THE SAGAS OF VASTER BRITAIN—*Continued.*

PAGE

The Children	-	-	-	-	-	-	310
Briton to Briton: An Appeal	-	-	-	-	-	-	312
Canada	-	-	-	-	-	-	314
Victoria	-	-	-	-	-	-	317
The Lament for the Chief	-	-	-	-	-	-	322
Mafeking	-	-	-	-	-	-	325
Our Bit of "The Thin Red Line"	-	-	-	-	-	-	329
Return of the Troops	-	-	-	-	-	-	331
Crowning of Empire	-	-	-	-	-	-	333

LAKE LYRICS—

Vapor and Blue	-	-	-	-	-	-	341
The Children of the Foam	-	-	-	-	-	-	342
How One Winter Came in the Lake Region	-	-	-	-	-	-	344
On the Shore	-	-	-	-	-	-	345
The Winter Lakes	-	-	-	-	-	-	346
A Lake Memory	-	-	-	-	-	-	347
The Flight of the Gulls	-	-	-	-	-	-	348
How Spring Came	-	-	-	-	-	-	349
Lake Huron	-	-	-	-	-	-	350
Sunset, Lake Huron	-	-	-	-	-	-	350
Nama-Way-Qua-Donk—The Bay of Sturgeons	-	-	-	-	-	-	352

A Dedication

In the struggling, darkened horde
Of this world's wide moan,
Dreamer of the golden reed,
Thou must thrive alone.

Too busy in its fevered marts,
Too eager in its strife,
Where all would teach, and few
would learn,
We lose the larger life.

We pass the fields of magic by,
To reach the favored place ;
And sadly find our gods have gone
With far averted face.

Eager to clutch the golden "then,"
Or flee from out the fear,
Too late we learn, too late, alas,
We missed the gloried "here."

Elemental and Human Verse

Poems of Wilfred Campbell

Poetry

EARTH's dream of poetry will never die.
It lingers while we linger, base or true—
A part of all this being. Life may change,
Old customs wither, creeds become as nought,
Like autumn husks in rainwinds; men may kill
All memory of the greatness of the past,
Kingdoms may melt, republics wane and die,
New dreams arise and shake this jaded world;
But that rare spirit of song will breathe and live
While beauty, sorrow, greatness hold for men
A kinship with the eternal; until all
That earth holds noble wastes and fades away.
Wrong cannot kill it. Man's material dream
May scorn its uses, worship baser hope
Of life's high purpose, build about the world
A brazen rampart: through it all will come
The iron moan of life's unresting sea;
And through its floors, as filtered blooms of dawn,
Those flowers of dream will spring, eternal, sweet,
Speaking for God and man; the infinite mystery
Will ever fold life round; the mighty heart
Of earth's humanity ceaseless throb and beat
As round this globe the vasty deeps of sky,
And round earth's shores the wide, encompassing sea.
Outside this rind of hardened human strife
There lies this mantle of mighty majesty,
Thought's cunning cannot probe, its science plumb.
Earth's schools of wisdom, in their darkness, spell
The common runes of knowledge; but there lies

A greatness, vast, behind this taper gleam,
That stands for somewhat lore hath never weighed
In all its ponderings of thought-pulsing brain.
Shakespeare, the Mighty, touched it as he passed.
The Man in Uz did feel it, shook the folds
Of some great garment's hem of One who passed
The vasty gates of Orion at one stride.
All earth's high souls have felt it in their time,
Have risen to this mighty deep in thought,
Or worshipped in the blackness and the gleam.

Dream not because life's taper flame grows dim,
Man's soul grows wasted gazing on dull gold,
His spirit shrunk with canker of life's ill,
That earth's great nights will darken their splendors
down,

Her dawns will fail to rise, this mighty world
Will cease to roll its vast appointed way;
And beauty and love, and all that man holds sweet
For youth and age, the effort glad, the joy,
The memory of old greatness gone before,
Not hold their magic 'neath the Almighty Will.

Yea, 'tis eternal as the wave, the sky,
Changing forever, never wholly passing,
A part of all this dream that will not die,
It lives forever. Years may fade and pass,
Youth's dream decline to age and death's decay,
Ills and sharp griefs, despairs and agonies come:
While earth remains her spirit will not fail.
That greatness back of all will still console,
Man's life will still be sweet, its purpose glad,
The morn will still be morning, and the night
Star splendors arched above the eternal peace,
The eternal yearning and the eternal dream.

My Library

You ask me where I get these thoughts,
 These dreams melodious, mystical,
 I read them in God's book of lore,
 Wide open, splendid, by my door.

Its pages are the magic sky,
 The wonder of the iron earth,
 And all those dreams that time let fly
 Since being's earliest birth.

I read them in those curious runes,
 Those tragedies of love and strife,
 That chart of memory-haunted dunes,
 That demon angel-book that man calls life.

Lines on a Skeleton

THIS was the mightiest house that God e'er made,
 This roofless mansion of the incorruptible.
 These joists and bastions once bore walls as fair
 As Solomon's palace of white ivory.
 Here majesty and love and beauty dwelt,
 Shakespeare's wit from these lorn walls looked down.
 Sadness like the autumn made it bare,
 Passion like a tempest shook its base,
 And joy filled all its halls with ecstasy.

This was the home wherein all dreams of earth
 And air and ocean, all supreme delights,
 Made mirth and madness: wisdom pored alone;
 And power dominion held: and splendid hope:
 And fancy like the delicate sunrise woke
 To burgeoning thought and form and melody.

Beneath its dome the agony of the Jew,
The pride of Cæsar or the hate of Cain,
The thought of Plato or the heart of Burns
Once dwelt in some dim form of being's light.

Within these walls of wondrous structure, dread,
A magic lute of elfin melody
Made music immortal, such as never came
From out those ancient halls of Orphean song.

Love dreamed of it, and like a joy it rose.
Power shaped its firm foundations like the base
Of mountain majesty: and o'er its towers
Truth from fair windows made his light look down.

But came a weird and evil demon host,
Besieged its walls, destroyed its marvellous front;
Shuttered its casements, dismantled all its dream,
And hurled it down from out its sunward height;
And now it lies bereft of all its joy
And pride and power and godlike majesty;
The sport of elements and hideous mimes,
That blench its corridors, desecrate its rooms,
Where once dwelt love and beauty, joy and hope,
Now tenantless: save for the incurious wind,
And ghostlike rains that beat its bastions bare,
And evil things that creep its chambers through.

But whither thence is fled that tenant rare,
That weird indweller of this wasted house?
Back from the petalled bloom withdraws the dew,
The melody from the shell, the day from heaven,
To build afar earth's resurrection morn.

And so, Love trusts, in some diviner air
The lord of this lorn mansion dwells in light
Of vaster beauty, vaster scope and dream;
Where weariness and gladness satiate not,
Where power and splendid being know no ruin,
And evil greeds and envyings work no wrong.

The Soul's Bath

At even when the roseate deeps
Of daylight dim from heaven's bars,
The soul her earth-worn garment slips,
And naked stands beneath the stars;

And there unto that river vast,
That mighty tide of night, whose girth
With splendid planets, brimming past,
Doth wash the ancient rim of earth,

She comes and plunges in; and laves
Her weariness in that vast tide,
That life-renewing deep, whose waves
Are wide as night is wide.

Then from the pure translucent flow
Of that unplumbed, invigorate sea,
Godlike in truth's white spirit-glow
She stands unshamed and free.

The Discoverers

This poem is dedicated to the memory of all those great souls who, in days gone by, in the bold spirit of discovery ventured out on the then trackless seas of the unknown west, in quest of this New World which their undaunted zeal and enterprise have won for us as a boon to the race and a blessing to mankind.

THEY feared no unknown, saw no horizon dark,
Counted no danger; dreamed all seas their road
To possible futures: struck no craven sail
For sloth or indolent cowardice; steered their keels
O'er crests of heaving ocean, leagues of brine,
While Hope firm kept the tiller, Faith, in dreams,
Saw coasts of gleaming continents looming large
Beyond the ultimate of the sea's far rim.
Thus was it ever. Souls too great for sloth
And impotent ease, goaded by inward pain
Of some divine, great yearning restlessness;
Which would not sit at home on servile shores
And take the good their fathers wrought in days
Long-ancient time-ward,—reap what others sowed;
But, nobler, sought to win a world their own,
Not conquered by others, but a virgin shore,
Where men might build the future; rear new realms
Of human effort; forgetful of the past,
And all its ill and failure; raising anew
The godlike dreams of genius, knowing only
Immortal possibility of man
To grow to larger vastness, holier dreams,
Made certain in straight laws of human life
And national vision; lived in lofty lives
Of manhood strong and noblest womanhood.

So thus it was, and is, and e'er will be!
The ill we do we leave behind us as

The phantom cloak of yesterday's sleep, thrown off
At newer waking to life's splendid dawn.
So dreamed they, eager, in those olden days,
Saw visions in the future, round the west
Of Europe's fading sunsets; held a hope
Of some new paradise for poor men's cure
From despotisms of old dynasties
And cruel iron creeds of warped despairs.
Hungering for light and truth and righteousness,
So launched they, setting sail toward sunset verge
Of lonely, inhospitable Ocean hurling back
From his grey mane sad wrecks of their desires.

We know their story, read the truth where they
Knew only in man's hope and loftier soul
Which strove and dared and greatly overcame,
Conquering scorn of man and veils of doubt,
Wresting from nature half her secret, cruel,
Wherewith she darkens down in glooms apart
The mystery of this planet, where we sleep
And wake and toil, redeeming high resolves,
Chaining the future to the present act.

We ponder on their daring, their vast hope,
That compassed all a planet in its dream.
We marvel at that stern defiance, where
A single man, in a degenerate age,
Would throw the gauntlet down against a world,
Defying narrow custom, small beliefs,
Strangled in lies; and staking all on one
Swift certainty of reason, based on thought,
Which read from nature, not from childish tomes
Of baseless superstitions, and dared all,
Left the kind land behind, and ventured out
On what men deemed a hideous demon waste,

An endless vortex, wherein poor souls caught
Were swept to vastness, gulfed and swallowed down.
We wonder at this greatness, yet we know
That thus forever shall human greatness be,
Man's only truth in life to stand alone;
Invincible power the spirit's solitude.

Beneath the sky, that marvel of earth's night,
That vast reproof of all our littleness,
That shining rebuke to our unfaithfulness,
That scorner of our despairs; 'neath its dim tent
Of fold on fold of fleecy infinities;
That soul of man is but a puny thing,
A fork-like snake in its own petty fires,
Which doth not rise to some high eminence
Of human thought and vast forgetfulness
Of all this common ill and common deed,
And loom to somewhat of that stature, great,
That God did dream us! So those mighty souls,
Watching His stars, read nightly fixed and sure,
A certainty; while every yeasty wave,
A monster mountain, roared to gulf them down.

We are a part of that great dream they dreamed.
We know wherein they failed, as all life fails.
We know the greatness they could never dream,
The certainty behind that sunset veil,
Which lured them on beyond its misty verge;
And we are witness that their hope was sure,
And true and wise and voice of God to men.
We are the witnesses that they were right,
And all the small and common minds were wrong,
The scorers of their faith, the laughers-down
Of their sublime enthusiasms; like as all
Dim ages of this world have heard and seen.

Yea, we are witnesses that they who hoped,
And greatly planned, and greatly dreamed and dared,
Were greater and more godlike, truer souls
And wiser in their day than those who sat
With shaking head and shallow platitude,
Made foolish vulgar prophecy of defeat;
Yea, we are witnesses that one true man
With faith in nature, his own heart and brain,
And daring, fearless, caring nought for aught,
Save his own trust in some high godlike vision,
Is greater far than all a world of men
Who are but shadows of a worn-out age
Which they have long outlived; as rotten trunks
Do mark the place where some huge oak went down.

We are the dream which they did dream; but we,
If we are great as they were, likewise know
That man is ever onward, outward bound
To some far port of his own soul's desire,
Knowing the present ever incomplete,
In love's reflection of the heart's high goal.

And now no more this western world is deemed
A home for liberty and hope's desire.
Men learn in wisdom, as the years glide on,
And life is ever the same in east or west.
And human nature, lost in its own toils
Of earthly strivings, loses that gold thread
Of life's sincerity, repeating o'er again
The grim despotic tyrannies of old,
On newer shores to freedom dedicate
By loftier souls who won this world in vain.

So is it ever. Human grief and ill
And human tyranny know no special strand.

All lands alike to tyrants are a spoil,
From ills of race no continent is immune.
Men cannot flee old evils though they cross
Whole oceans of surges beating in between.
We bear with us the despot in our blood:
It is the race that speaks forever in
Our strivings and our weakness: Nero flames
A newer Rome in each new tyranny
Which wakens a western world to deeds of blood.

And we, who have no continents new to find,
No shadowed planet darkening back our dream,
Who know the new world but the old world new:
The same old evil and the same old gleam
In other guise; but 'neath the same snakehead,
Lifting ill eyes to choke our visions down
In monster folds of human servitude:—
We, too, as they, are earth's discoverers,
We likewise can be fixed in our regard,
We likewise can be brave, sincere and true,
Dreaming far peaks of greatness on ahead,
If we but strive and beat our weakness down;
Setting our sails, invincible, for those ports
Beyond the common, sheltered shoals of self;
Cleaving with daring keel those open seas
Of larger life, those heaving floors of hope;
Marking our course by those fixed stars alone,
Forever steadfast, witnesses of God,
Pointing to continents vast of holier dream.

The Hills and the Sea

GIVE me the hills and wide water,
Give me the heights and the sea;
And take all else, 'tis living
And heaven enough for me.
For my fathers of old they were hillsmen,
My sires they were sons of the sea.

Give me the uplands of purple,
The sweep of the vast world's rim,
Where the sun dips down, or the dawns
Over the earth's edge swim;
With the days that are dead, and the old earth-tales,
Human, and haunting, and grim.

Give me where the great surfs landward
Break on the iron-rimmed shore,
Where Winter and Spring are eternal,
And the miles of sea-sand their floor;
Where Wind and Vastness, forever,
Walk by the red dawn's door.

Back from this grime of the present,
This slavery worse than all death,
Let me stand out alone on the highlands,
Where there's life in the brave wind's breath;
Where the one wise word and the strong word
Is the word that the great hush saith.

The Vanguard

(To the Twentieth Century)

Out of the grey light,
Into the daylight,
We are His battlemen
Riding along;
Century-laden,
To some dim aidenn,
Hope in our vanguard,
Courage, our song.
"Check up the curb, there!"
"Firm in the stirrup, there!"
"Steady! men, steady!"
"Riding along!"

Out of the grim light,
Into the dim light,
Under the morning airs,
Where the pale stars
Fade with the dying
Murk of night flying,
Into the smoke-mists,
Over earth's bars—
Where the dim sorrows
Of long-dead to-morrows
Sink into ashes,
Crumble to night—
Cheerfully, gravely,
Manfully, bravely,
Ride we, ride we,
Into His light.

There was an Inn, we
Rang to begin, we
Thundered its rafters

With generous song—
There a low mound, we
Left a brave comrade,
Worn of the journey,
Riding along.

There was a battle fought,
Fiercely the blades rang,
Horseman and charger
Grappled the foe—
Hard spent and hard hit,
Teeth clenched and foaming bit,
Out of the battle-smoke,
Forward we go.

Bravely faced, bravely won,
Nobly died, nobly done,
Lifting the firm face,
Riding along:

Always to hillward,
Truth and God-will ward,
Never toward darkness,
Never toward wrong;
Not dumb cattle! men,
We are God's battlemen,
Waging His fierce fights
Under the night,
Under the smoke-mists,
Through the dim centuries,
Ride we, ride we,
Into His light.

Hold up the head, there!
Quicker the tread, there!

Eyes on the mountain heights!

Lift the old song!

“Bravely the right goes,

“Down with the dread foes,

“Evil and sorrow,

“Hate and old wrong!

“Doubt but the battle-smoke,

“Dusk but the morning’s cloak,

“Care and despairing but

“Dreams of the night;

“Roll the grey mists up!

“Drain deep the dawn-cup!

“Ride we, ride we,

“Into His light!”

Old men and young men,

Cheering the faint ones,

Bearing the weak ones,

Chiding the strong;

Over the dead past,

Ice-cold, furnace-blast,

Riding along;

We are His valiant hearts,

Wending His journey dread,

Eyes to the hills ahead,

Hearken our song:—

“Watch for His dawning! mark,

“Sorrow but the shrivelled bark,

“Love the white kernel sap;

“Hatred and wrong,

“But the fierce, sudden hail,

“Rattling our iron mail,

“Riding along.”

Yea, as we thunder, we

Know earth’s old wonder, we

Feel all about us
Her splendor and tears;
Her might and her glory,
Her centuried story,
Her weird, blind caravan
Down the dead years.
Her grief and her wisdom,
Her heart-breaks and yearning,
Her legends of iron-eaten,
Blood-crusteds wars:—
Her loves and despairings,
Wrecks of old dynasties,
Barbarous; splendid and
Old as the stars:—
They who look down on us,
Cold in their far-light,
Orient, mystical,
Under the night;
Weird in their silence,
Grim, fixed witnesses,
Long, of earth's struggles,
Her great grim graveyards,
Of passion and might.

But under we thunder,
Charge, battle, and blunder,
Out of the night-mists,
Unto the day,
Led by an impulse,
A fierce joy and heart-hope,
Older and stronger
And greater than they.
Sound the clear bugle, there!
Wide, let the summons blare!
Challenge the centuries,
Fearless of wrong!

Bury that dead face!
Strong heart, fill his place!
Tenderly, manfully,
Riding along!
Eyes to the right, ahead!
Grim be the way we tread,
Sound down the silence, murk,
Hope's golden horn!
Sweet, sweet! silver clear!
Challenging despair and fear;
Though life be at its neap,
Death is but the morning sleep,
Ere day be born.

Close up amain, there!
Curb on that rein, there!
Eyes hillward and Godward,
Forging ahead!
Down the dread journey,
Flashing the stern eye,
Out on dim iron-peaks
Lifetimes ahead!
Searching the night-line,
Murk's fading white line,
For the dawn's message,
For the day's red;
Sinking old sorrows
In nobler to-morrows,
Ringing the levin
With earth's battle-song;
Hugging the after
Tears of old laughter,
Hopeward and Godward,
Riding along.

Eyes to the front, there!
 Iron 'gainst the brunt, there!
 Jarring the battle-shock,
 Under the night;
 From earth's weird wonder,
 We thunder, we thunder,
 Out from the centuries'
 Battle and blight;
 Clear, clear, our bugles, clear,
 Challenging despair and fear,
 Ride we, ride we,
 Into His light.

Commemoration Ode

(Cambridge, June, 1905)

BROTHERS in action, aspiration, aim,
 Co-heritors of that old breed, old blood,
 That ancient speech, that ancient faith and song;—
 Once more we stand in these memorial halls,
 And meet in kind communion, as of yore
 Those sun-filled hours of youth's Hyperion morn,
 When life's great future blinded eager eyes,
 And ways of vague achievement lay before,
 With golden roadways leading on to fame
 Or other portals of Hope's azure vision
 Beyond the mists of aspiration's dream.

Once more we meet here with our tithe of lore,
 Or dearly earned experience of this world,
 And all its mystery of blinded ways;—
 And here we face the future; nearer now

That last dread culmination of our days,
That solemn gate of earth's departing scene,
Where love and patience lay their burdens down,
Here at life's mid-day mile-stone do we stand,
Knowing our vision greater than our act,
Our possibility vaster than our dream.

Greater than all earth's woven creeds is that
Eternal possibility of man
To rise to nobler futures, loftier peaks
Of golden sunrise visions, climbing on
To those vast vistas of the ideal man.

Learning is nature's kindred spirit. She
Holds up the torch to reason, seeking ever
That holy, immortal, changeless face of Truth.
Language may falter, palter, lose her old
Plain utterance, simple, pure and undefiled;—
But upward still is upward, straight is straight,
And narrow the way and hard the paths to God.

Not all the weight of vast material power,
The brazen frown, the iron hand of wealth,
Can make the ill less evil; or the good
A part of evil. Still midway will stand
That sword of Eden flaming in between,
Whence man came naked, naked will return,
Clothed only in the truth of heart and brain.

There is no complex where the spirit rules.
The truth is simple as the perfect curve
Of elemental beauty. Life no lie,
Till man did build a fence to shut out God,
And hide with hideous tapestries the stars.

Those endless, gobelin questionings shut in
Man's soul from the eternal. Out beyond,
Where night and vasts anticipate the dawn,
No muffled doubt goes groping, where those hosts,
Immortal, radiant, wheel their mystic fires,
Orion, and the ancient Pleiades.

Think not because we lose the road, that we
Are lost eternal. Still the road shines on,
Through murky mists of this grim modern dream,
These smokes, material, shrouding His vast plan.
And still a child-face teaches beauty's truth;
A wayside blossom still remains a flower:
And love, and hate of evil rule the world.
This shining roadway holds no cul-de-sac,
Though close the gorges seem to hem us in,
With human finality, reason's narrow bounds,
Within these hopeless mountains of the mind.

And often 'mid the anguish and turmoil
Of all this fevered being, I have felt
A sudden flame of some large knowledge, flashed,
And then withdrawn from out my spirit's ken;
As though God opened His vast doors of light
And outward being. Then my soul hath felt
Some mystic glimpse of far infinity,
As though there flamed a world outside our world,
Beyond this prison house of all our tears,
This finite cell that we inhabit here.

And in that sudden light it seemed as if
This house of sadness, these grim narrow streets,
This blinded search from shrivelled day to day,
And all that past which memory intervenes,

This hourly round of earth's experience,
This opening up of vistas of life's days
And months and years, had all been lived before,
And this grim present but old dreams re-dreamed

So moves life's mystery, as though fold in fold,
Of sense 'neath sense, like sleep which mantles dream,
Man's gross heredity muffles in his soul
From somewhat larger, mightier, some far vast,
As mists material curtain out God's stars.

For life is greater than its mightiest deeds,
And we, than this environment, wherein we dwell,
This mansion, vast, of failure, where the winds
Of youth's far longings haunt these banquet halls
Of deeds unfinished, broken pillars of faith,
And ruined stairways leading to the stars.

This, Brothers, is my message: Let us keep
The olden faith in glad sincerity,
Remembering ever, simplicity is the truth;
Religion reverence; wisdom but to keep
Those dread eternal laws which guide the world.

Forgetting not our duty to the race,
From which our sires and our great-grandsires sprang;
That mighty stock, that iron heredity,
Uncompromising, stern, which planted deep
The holy roots of that wide tree which bore
This blossom of liberty which we pluck to-day.

Which taught us, what we all too soon forget,
No earthly generation stands alone,
But is the link in some vast mystic chain
Extending downward from the ancient days.

Remembering that allegiance which we owe
The blood we bear, the tongue our fathers forged
From out the rude and barbarous dreams of those
Who gave us primal being. This our work,
To build, to weld, replenish, and subdue.

Not like blind force which treads this earth like iron,
And makes the continents tremble; not by greed,
Or grim political craft; but by that power,
That sad sincerity of the Perfect Man.

Yea, this, my message! Life is short and stern,
And ours at best a feeble, cabined will.
Our mind is finite:—But the soul of man,
Which hopes and trembles, suffers and aspires,
Rebukes his pettier moments; its vast dreams
Proclaim our origin high, our destiny great,
And possibilities limitless like the sea.

The Dreamers

(A Parable.)

THEY lingered on the middle heights
Betwixt the brown earth and the heaven;
They whispered, "We are not the night's,
But pallid children of the even."

They muttered, "We are not the day's,
For the old struggle and endeavor,
The rugged and unquiet ways,
Are dead and driven past forever."

They dreamed upon the cricket's tune,
The winds that stirred the withered grasses:

But never saw the blood-red moon
That lit the spectre mountain-passes.

They sat and marked the brooklet steal
In smoke-mist o'er its silvered surges:
But marked not, with its peal on peal,
The storm that swept the granite gorges.

They dreamed the shimmer and the shade,
And sought in pools for haunted faces:
Nor heard again the cannonade
In dreams from earth's old battle-places.

They spake, "The ages all are dead,
The strife, the struggle and the glory;
We are the silences that wed
Betwixt the story and the story.

"We are the little winds that moan
Between the woodlands and the meadows,
We are the ghosted leaves, wind-blown
Across the gust-light and the shadows."

Then came a soul across those lands,
Whose face was all one glad, rapt wonder;
And spake: "The skies are ribbed with bands
Of fire, and heaven all racked with thunder.

"Climb up and see the glory spread,
High over cliff and 'scarpment yawning:
The night is past, the dark is dead,
Behold the triumph of the dawning!"

Then laughed they with a wistful scorn,
"You are a ghost, a long-dead vision;
You passed by ages ere was born
This twilight of the days elysian.

“There is no hope, there is no strife,
But only haunted hearts that hunger,
About a dead, scarce dreamed-of life,
Old ages when the earth was younger.”

Then came by one in mad distress:
“Haste, haste below, where strong arms weaken,
The fighting ones grow less and less!
Great cities of the world are taken!

“Dread evil rolls by like a flood,
Men’s bones beneath his surges whiten,
Go where the ages mark in blood
The footsteps that their days enlighten.”

Still they but heard, discordant mirth,
The thin winds through the dead stalks rattle;
While out from far-off haunts of earth
There smote the mighty sound of battle.

Now there was heard an awful cry,
Despair that reddened heaven asunder,
White pauses when a cause would die,
Where love was lost and souls went under.

The while these feebly dreamed and talked
Betwixt the brown earth and the heaven,
Faint ghosts of men who breathed and walked,
But deader than the dead ones even.

And out there on the middle height
They sought in pools for haunted faces,
Nor heard the cry across the night,
That swept from earth’s dread battle-places.

The Lyre Degenerate

The literature of the soul of nature as found in the great poets is inspiring ; but the decadent worship of beast, gnat and straddle-bug in the animal story and the artificial nature-verse of to-day is degrading. It is time that men of thought and spirit regenerate the world of America from its present materialistic slough with its consequent superficial cult of neo-paganism.

VANISHED the golden Homer,
Vanished the great god Pan,
Vanished the mighty mind of Greece,
The ancient visions of man.

Gone are the mighty moderns,
Hands that swept the keys,
That ran the splendid gamut of dream,
Of life's deep harmonies.

Dead are the lofty dreamers,
The true and the wise of earth,
Who stirred the spirits of yearning men
And gave new impulse birth.

No more those ladders to heaven,
Golden rung upon rung
Of the lofty deed and the splendid dream
In the song of singers is sung;—

For now in the shrunken pages
Of helot dreamers of song
The idiot children of primal earth,
Brute and insect, throng.

And this the end of beauty,
The ultimate dreaming of man,

To shrink to this hideous, meaningless cult.
Alas, for the great god Pan!

Alas, for the lore of sages!
Alas, for the Parthenon!
Alas, for the yearning Israelite
His mountains of woe upon!

After the mind of Shakespeare,
After the soul of Christ,
To sink to the level of hoof and paw,
To keep this hideous tryst;

Lost to that higher, holier thought
Under this latter-day gleam,
Living again in the mind of the beast
An earlier, dreader dream.

Sunk to the law of the jungle and fen
From the dream of the godlike man,
To learn in the lore of reptile and brute
The cunning of Caliban.

And this the end of the ages' art
The world's high yearning pain,
To trace the trail of the serpent and egg
On the monster earth again.

To know eternity howl and yelp,
The primal instinct's dream;
To bask in the sun or curl in the dusk
Of an arctic moonlight's gleam.

Yea, better than all this age can give,
Rather our lowest our least;
Better to sin as men and women
Than sink to the best of the beast.

Better than live in this hideous round
Of claw and beak and wing,
Better the dread eternal black
Of death's eternal ring.

And Thou who art of all things Lord,
By whom all perish or dream,
Who wakest the flower, the star, the love,
The mighty world or the gleam ;

Who after sad winter wakest the rose,
After midnight the dawn,
By whose dread word the children of earth
Up thy mountains have gone ;

Teach me the lesson that Mother Earth
Teacheth her children each hour,
When she keeps in her deeps the basic root,
And wears on her breast the flower.

And as the brute to the basic root
In the infinite cosmic plan,
So in the plan of the infinite mind
The flower of the brute is man ;—

Man who blossoms in beauty and love
And wisdom's wondrous bloom,
And climbs by spiral stairways dread
To the dawn of the world's great doom.

And when doth come that marvelous change,
Thou Master of being and death,
O let me die as the great dead died,
Not passing of instinct's breath ;—

Let me lie down with a loftier thought
Than passing of beast and leaf,
That the cry of human soul for soul
Is greater than nature's grief;

That man is nearer the mountains of God
Than in those ages when
He slept the sleep of the tiger and fox,
And woke to the strife of the den.

And when from the winter of thy wild death
Thine angels of sunlight call;
Waken me unto my highest, my best,
Or waken me not at all.

Work

To thy work, heart that aches,
To thy soul's best work.
Let not the bitter hour
Stab with its grim dirk.

Unto thy toil; and if the world
Want not thy voice to-day,
Grieve not, thine hour will come,
Love is not waste away.

Art that grows from love
Of beauty, life's high dream,
Will not utterly vanish out,
As weed-drift on a stream.

Not one sunbeam is lost,
Though it vanish in a cave.
And He, great Master of Mystery,
Will redeem the gift He gave.

The Blind Caravan

I AM a slave, both dumb and blind,
Upon a journey dread;
The iron hills lie far behind,
The seas of mist ahead.

Amid a mighty caravan
I toil a sombre track,
The strangest road since time began,
Where no foot turneth back.

Here rosy youth at morning's prime
And weary man at noon
Are crooked shapes at eventime
Beneath the haggard moon.

Faint elfin songs from out the past
Of some lost sunset land
Haunt this grim pageant drifting, vast,
Across the trackless sand.

And often for some nightward wind
We stay a space and hark,
Then leave the sunset lands behind,
And plunge into the dark.

Somewhere, somewhere, far on in front,
There strides a lonely man
Who is all strength, who bears the brunt,
The battle and the ban.

I know not of his face or form,
His voice or battle-scars,

Or how he fronts the haunted storm
Beneath the wintry stars;

I know not of his wisdom great
That leads this sightless host
Beyond the barren hills of fate
Unto some kindlier coast.

But often 'mid the eerie black
Through this sad caravan
A strange, sweet thrill is whispered back,
Borne on from man to man.

A strange, glad joy that fills the night
Like some far marriage horn,
Till every heart is filled with light
Of some belated morn.

The way is long, and rough the road,
And bitter the night, and dread,
And each poor slave is but a goad
To lash the one ahead.

Evil the foes that lie in wait
To slay us in the pass,
Bloody the slaughter at the gate,
And bleak the wild morass;

And I am but a shriveled thing
Beneath the midnight sky;
A wasted, wan remembering
Of days long wandered by.

And yet I lift my sightless face
Toward the eerie light,
And tread the lonely way we trace
Across the haunted night.

Ode to the Laurentian Hills

BLUE hills, elusive, far and dim,
You lift so high beyond our care;
Where earth's horizon seems to swim,
You dream in loftier air.

Here where our world wends day by day
Its sad, material round,
We know not of that purer ray
By which your heights are bound.

Ignoble thoughts, ignoble aims
Shut us from that high heaven;
Those dawning dreams, those sunset flames,
With which your peaks are riven.

You seem so lone and bleak, so vast
Beneath your dome of sky,
So patient to the heat or blast
That smites or hurtles by;

So vague, withdrawn in mists, remote,
Shut out in glories wide;
The very fleecy clouds that float,
Your dreamings seem to hide.

We in our plots of circumstance
Are prisoners of a grim despair;
While your far shining shoulders glance
From heights where all things dare.

Could we from out this cloak of glooms
That prisons and oppresses,
But reach those large, sky-bounded rooms
Of your divine recesses;

Then might we find that godlike calm,
That peace that holdeth you,
That soars like wordless prayer or psalm
To heaven with your blue.

Then might we know that silent power,
That patience, that supreme
Indifference to day and hour
Of your eternal dream.

Then might we lose, in fire and dew
Of your pellucid airs,
This diffidence to dare and do,
That grovels and despairs.

And dream once more that high desire,
That greatness dead and gone,
When earth's winged eagles eyed the fire
Your sunrise peaks upon.

That power serene, life's vasts to scan,
Beyond earth's futile tears;
Her hopes, her curse, the bliss, the ban
Of all her anguished years.

The Art Divine

THAT Artist of the Universe
Behind the wind and rain
Hath drawn a dream of splendid death
Across my window pane.

And in the lonely, haunted day,
My luminous maple tree
Hath now assumed the magic pomp
Of some weird pageantry.

And 'mid the common day and thought,
My casement to me brings
A picture rarer than all art
Of man's imaginings.

Not all the wondrous hues of Watts,
Not Turner's wizard scheme,
With all its mastery, haunts my heart
Like this autumnal dream;

For o'er my sill, all life, all death,
All moods life, death can name,
Press on me from that magic frieze
Of earth's funereal flame.

Day and Night

Two dreams forever pass my door,
One gaudy, one in sombre dress:
The Day, one weird and endless roar;
The Night, a million silences.

To one I give, the slave I am,
My curse of being, fevered breath;
The other, 'mid her godlike calm,
Lifts me to dwell with Death.

My Creed

THIS is my creed in face of cynic sneer,
The cavilling doubt, the pessimistic fear;—
We come from some far greatness, and we go
Back to a greatness, spite of all our woe.

Responsibility

MAN is not evil when he stands alone,
'Tis in the aggregate he loses truth,
And builds him up life's weakness by his ruth.
No single conscience makes its brother moan,
The slaving toiler withered to the bone,
The wasting age ere life hath garnered youth;—
No single soul hath done this; each and all,
We add a pebble to a mighty wall
That shuts this world from freedom and God's truth.

Sleep

SWEET, brief condition of oblivion,
Easer of care-worn mind and sorrowed soul;
Yea, next to death, God's most compassionate gift.

Thou art that short mortality wherein men
Give over their spirits to omnipotence,
That sea of faith whereon men launch their barks,
Undoubting of the hope of their return,
And float on opiate airs and favoring gales
Out to some land beyond these realms of earth,
And all its sad dominion, aching chain,
That gnaws men's vitals festering day by day.

The king, the galley-slave are equal here,
The sinner and the saint alike have peace,
A short forgetting of the angered hour,
The poisoned memory, or the woe to be.

Within thy mighty halls of phantasy
Thine opiate silence hangs its curtain black,
And ever the hideous dream is but a dream.

'Tis sweet to rise to greet the kindling morn,
When all is happiness, holy, glad and well:—
But to the agonized spirit, life's remorse,
Time's prisoners of failure, earth's defeat,
'Tis agony to wake, to meet the sun.
For these, O kind Magician, thou most true,
Give these, life's weary, woe's poor suffering ones,
Earth's mightiest blessing, dream-compelling sleep.

Sleep

DIM Sleep, that keep'st the soul in awe,
By gates that lead to the unknown:—
All life sways to thy magic law,
All portals open toward thy throne;—
Thou arbiter in ebon stone,
A mist about thee ever thrown.

Thou peoplest the dark with visions filled,
Thou breathest with thy poppied breath,
And all the loves of life are stilled
Unto similitude of death.

The Question

I.

HAVE we come to the outermost wall
Of this terrible temple of time,
To find it but iron after all,
A horrible gaol of the soul,
A prison whose walls are a shard
Of cold, implacable fact;
Where, through the dim centuries gone,
The poor weak eons of men
Have circled in bubbles of joy,
To find but a shroud of despair,
Cabined and crushed at the last?

And this: Is this but the end?
Have we fathomed the secret in vain?
Was man but a last blind coil
Of the brute evolution of time,
Unwinding itself in the dark?
Or the full-blown rose of a race,
Whose scent and whose petals are gone?
Was the law: Aspire till ye die,
For ye die when ye cease to aspire?
Is it true, we have fathomed the dark,
Probed the deeps to the edge of the black,
Till the fiat goes forth, Ye are done?
Is it all? And beyond it, what next?
Doth there glimmer the thread of a dawn?

II.

God!

We utter the sound of a word,
And power dissolves into nought,
And vanity crumbles in dust;
We, who have reached the bare wall,
Have fathomed this prison of dark,
Stand naked in awe of a name.
We, who have balanced the "all,"
Weighed the dreams of the past in a scale,
And found them but vanishing dust;
Here in the end of the days;
In this last high poise of a stair,
Built out of the quarries of thought,
Wrought slow in the workhouse of truth,
Our knowledge and wisdom all gone;
Like children all frightened and shamed,
Stand in awe at the sound of a name;
As hosts, that huddled at night,
From the rude cruel riot of rout,
Stay, fearful and doubting, dismayed,
'Mid the grim, unknowable dark,
For the glad, kind trumpet that calls
From the far, white comfort of dawn.

So we, who dreamed that we scaled
The high white mountains of thought;
From our ruined Babel of pride,
In the knowledge of self and of God;
Turn back from the jargon of tongues,
That scoff and clamor and cry,
To the wonder and awe of the child;
And plead in our weakness and doubt,
At the barriers, muffled, of dark,
That reach through the spaces of thought
To the far-off vastness of God.

III.

To the end? Have we really begun?
Have we yet even entered that gate,
That one wicket gate of the soul,
Which leads to the city of life?
That we say, we have come to the wall;
That we grope, like the blind, in the dark,
For the slow closing in of the walls
Of this grim torture-prison of life,
Where casement on casement fades out,
Till the last narrow pane disappears
On the confined despair of the soul,
And the narrow iron shard echoes back
The unseen executioner's stroke?

Is this but the end and the all,
The blind, grim climax of time?
Is God but necessities' will,
Where chance for an eon pursues
The rhythmic returns of a force?
Or a flame that flickers one way?
Or a huge grim hammer that beats
All out on the anvil of time;
All out, till the echoes repeat
Each caverned black edge of the void?

And this trembling flame of the soul,
In its hollow-built shard of the skull,
That flashes, then flickers and dies?

What of it? So fickle, so dim,
A candle-dip spark in the space;
That it measures the infinite void,
That it yearns to fill all with its hope,
Its love, its desire, and its dream,
That would grow to the stature of God?

What is it? So mystically small;
So infinite, vast in its aim;
So great in its yearning and growth;
It would leap to the light of the stars,
Would sound the abysses of space,
And measure the span of the worlds?

Those magical windows it throws
Open wide to the wonders of life,
That sympathy subtler than thought,
This subconscious dreaming that doubts
If waking be nightmare to sleep,
That leads to the real hidden world,
That world whose wonder pursues
Even here in this prison of time,
When the walls of this earth crumble down,
And the veils of the senses grow thin,
That shut from the realms beyond.

This hearing so delicate, fine,
This exquisite sense of the chords
Beaten out from the fibres of sound.

The magical world of the eye,
That catches all colors, all blends
Of mystical morning and night.

Weird memory, wove of all hints
Of the marvelous dreams of the past.

Strange thought, that probes ocean and land,
Man's soul, and the infinite void,
Builds the future, illumines the past,
Measures, weighs, judges, pardons, and damns.

Governs hearing, sight, memory, all;
Lord-Seer of all gates of delight;
Standing out on the mountains of dream.

Then, greater than all, even love,
That yearns through the eons of time,
That throbs through the hates and despairs,
Built out of the passions of men;
Yea, this above all, leavens all,
Filters down through the roots of the world,
To the dry, hidden heart of all things,
Waters all deserts of drought,
Spears million meadows with green,
Up-burgeons all blossom and fruit.

The House of Dreams

'MID all earth's mighty builders,
That ancient builder, Time,
Laughs at the art that crumbles
And the airy arts of rhyme.

But the story of godlike passion,
The mighty hate or desire,
Lives, when the hand that penned it
Is ruin with Sidon and Tyre.

Greater than all earth's temples,
Glories of art's high goal,
Is the mystical, magical temple
That God built for the soul.

Not in a day or hour,
Not in a thousand years,
He hath fashioned, for love to dwell in,
A temple of prayers and tears.

'Tis the dream and not the deed
That doth, eternal, endure;
The spirit, and not the form,
That makes earth's literature.

Soul

WIND of the wide world's mantled thought,
About the vague vast blowing;
This truth my wayward heart hath caught,
That being hath more doors than thought,
And life is more than knowing.

That creeds of darkness or of mind
Are but the scaly bark
That slips from off the centuried rind,
While inward works the impulse blind,
Amid the crannied dark.

And deeper than the builded theme
Of priest or book or seer,
There lies that life, that subtle dream
That rules the sunny warmth and gleam
That wakes the upward year.

And greater than all thoughts that fall
From wisdom's page or poet's song,
That dim impulse behind it all,
Flame from the ages' granite wall,
That finds no written tongue.

But speaks alike to mighty throngs
Or alien life apart;
That lifts whole races from their wrongs,
Or gives to one poor ploughman songs
That sing the whole world's heart.

This impulse in each being rife,
Deep hidden in each man;
This inward, mystic flame of life
Behind the passion or the strife,
The blessing or the ban.

Behind that fierceness none can tame,
Behind the ego dense,
It stands in some dim cell aflame,
Beyond all human thought or name,
A part of the immense.

Though science reads the cabined mind,
The wheeling stars and sun,
This mystic, veiled flame behind
Its barriers dread, shows her more blind
Than winds of night that run;

And search the hollow hills of sleep,
And beat with phantom hands;
But know not of the dreams that creep,
Or of the haunting ghosts that sweep
Athwart the haggard lands.

It is the master of all thought,
All impulse and all dream,
And builds or ruins, base or not,
The fabric of the common lot,
The blackness or the gleam.

It gives through some weird inward need
The centuries' impulse birth;
And weaves in subtle dream or deed,
Of those who burn or those who bleed,
All tragedies of earth.

Behind the mighty mind of Greece,
The Titan force of Rome,
It bade earth's battles rage or cease,
And reared those splendid dreams of peace,
In column, plinth and dome.

Behind the artist when he wrought
Earth's beauty's rarest dream,
Or nature's poet when he caught
The melodies of morning fraught
With summer's azure gleam.

It kindled Homer's golden song
Of elemental man,
And lurks behind the fateful throng,
That stairway dread, of earth's weird wrong
From Christ to Caliban.

It is that greater self behind
All earth's confused gleam,
That leads men up by stairways blind
Of blackness, where they grope to find
The heaven of their dream.

At all earth's altars it hath knelt,
Sought God 'mid stars and dew,
Wherever life by plain or veldt
Hath down the craving ages felt
The agony of the few.

All sorrows, passions, all delights,
All hopings, all despairs,
All earth's old splendors, all her blights,
Her agony of wrongs and rights,
Her ruined starward stairs;

Her songs, her battles, her grim blades
Forged in her caves of dream,
Her woe that cowers or upbraids;
Yea, all that glories, all that fades,
Was cradled in its gleam.

And every hero-heart who stood
Alone in some dread hour
(When man faced man for ill or good,
And history wrote her page in blood)
Was governed by its power.

Greater than mightiest thought of mind,
That measures life by rule,
It soars by stars or crannies blind,
In those dread dreams of God, behind
The Plato or the fool.

.
Wind of the wide world's mantled thought
About the vague vast blowing;
Beyond our little "is" and "not,"
Beyond the curtains of our thought,
Life's mighty tides are flowing.

In every common hour of life,
In every flame that glows,

In every breath of being rife
With aspiration or of strife
Man feels more than he knows.

Earth's child of science counts the stars
Upon God's garment's hem;
He plumbs the seas, the heavens' bars,
Chains Jove's fierce thunders to her cars,
Rebuilds her rarest gem.

But blind as night to that within,
That demon, god, or elf,
That weird impulse to soar or sin,
That universe of dreams that spin,
That heaven or hell in "self."

That something subtle that outweighs
The mightiest lore of man;
That master of his dreams and days,
Invisible in some weird haze
Behind his bliss or ban.

Which lifted Shakespeare from the clod,
Yet spake in Caliban;
That god in man, or man in god,
That dreamed all music from the sod
Since melody began.

That outsoared Shelley's lark in flight,
Beyond all dreams we know;
That knew with Milton music's might,
Or that exquisite dream delight
Of Paganini's bow.

That same dim impulse Saxon, Celt,
Mohawk or Tartar knew;

Earth's mightiest power to move or melt,
That in old Shylock's agony felt
The tragedy of the Jew.

This demon force that moves a world,
Hath breathed a simple flower,
With tendrils milky-white upcurled,
And with demoniac power hath hurled,
Earth's might in one short hour.

Hath burgeoned beauty from the blind,
Deep earthy woodland's heart;
This inward flame that wings the wind,
Great in comparison to mind
As nature unto art.

.
Wind of the wide world's winnowed dream,
About the vague vast blowing;
Beyond our futile taper-gleam
Of priestly creed and poet's theme,
God's tides of might are flowing.

Man feels the present, feels the past,
As one born blind may know
The sun, the earth, the rain or blast,
Or those dread phantom shadows cast,
His brother men who go.

But round about the dreams we are,
In caves of wind and fire,
Where mind is cabined; soul afar,
Doth rise eternal, star to star,
To heights of God's desire.

Life-Spent

OUT of the strife of conflict,
Out of the nightmare wild,
Thou bringest me, spent and broken,
Like the life of a little child.

Like the spume of a far-spent wave,
Or a wreck cast up from the sea,
Out from the pride of being,
My soul returns to thee.

Thou, who only art master,
Lord of the weak and the strong:
Who makest the kings of earth's struggles
As the far refrain of a song.

And thou teachest me all is as nothing
Save to follow the fate love willed,
And dree life's weird to the final port,
Where the tumult of being is stilled:

Where the woe that wrecked me is vanished,
And the pride that stayed me is gone:
And only the feeling of eventime,
When the toil of the world is done:—

O, Master of being and slumber,
When the pageant and pæan have passed;
Take me where thy great silence
Is vaster than all that is vast.

A Present-Day Creed

WHAT matters down here in the darkness?

'Tis only the rat that squeals,
Crushed down under the iron hoof.

'Tis only the fool that feels.

'Tis only the child that weeps and sorrows

For the death of a love or a rose;

While grim in its grinding, soulless mask,
Iron, the iron world goes.

God is an artist, mind is the all,

Only the art survives.

Just for a curve, a tint, a fancy,

Millions on millions of lives!

If this be your creed, O late-world poet,

Pass, with your puerile pose;

For I am the fool, the child that suffers,

That weeps and sleeps with the rose.

Truth

WHEN first I trod in wistful gropings lonely,

And felt for God, in crude impassioned youth;

I longed to know Thee and Thy spirit only,

Thou great, clear-orbèd Truth!

For Thee alone I sought 'mid earth's confusions,

By Thee, and Thee alone, I measured life,

Mighty or petty; drew its deep conclusions,

Plumbed its abysses, felt its ebb or strife.

I sorrow o'er myself, for I have wronged
The greatness that He made me, and have turned
Aside in dreams, where lighter fancies longed,
Or deeper channels where earth's passions burned.

But Thou, still onward in Thy fixed unturning,
Betwixt the olden ill and bitter moan,
Dost tread the true old way, Thy lamp still burning,
Led by Thy light alone.

And round and round in Thy great orbit flaming,
Like the fixed planets, Thou dost circle still,
'Mid new confusions, olden loves defaming,
And murky mists of those who work Thee ill.

The Singer

LIFE is too bitter,
Strife too strong;
Lackaday! lackaday!
Dead is poor Song.

There in the mart
Of the thronging, teeming;
Dead in the dust,
His goldlocks gleaming.

Killed in the fray,
With his glad heart broken;
Never a sigh for him,
Never a token

That the ill world cared ;
While with clamor and wrong,
She lifts the brute victors
Of Mammon along.

Dead in the dust,
With never a care for him ;
Save some day the green wreath
That the world's heart will wear
for him.

When there 'mid her hours
That are truest and latest,
She recalls, with dumb grieving,
The voice of her greatest.

The Heart of Song

Too much of sameness dulls our sense,
Which, like a bowstring, should be tense,
To send those arrows swift and clear,
To cleave the ether of the sphere,
And strike the living heart of song,
And from the electric centre thrill the
listening throng.

Too little of the love we feel,
Too little of the hate we know ;
Where we should pray, we only kneel,
And all the real life forego.

How can our song be true and loud,
And lifted to the morning cloud,
Across the fields of sunlit dew ?

How can we strike the lyre of life,
And sound the future's battle-strife,
Unless our hearts be vibrant, too?

O, would that poets' songs might fling,
Like dews from off the rosebud's wing,
Odors of life's awakening:
And never on the heart's best harpstrings
 cloy
The splendor of the world's great lyric
 joy!

Genius

I BUILT a house one wondrous night,
From splendid ruins of my soul,
And filled it with the sound and light
That girdles earth from pole to pole.

Its walls of whitest marble there,
A frozen, clustered splendor grew,
And all things beauteous and rare
Gladdened its perfect chambers through.

Strange relics of gone olden days,
Of ancient peoples, times and kings,
In those rare chambers met my gaze,
And gave me vast imaginings.

All glories of earth's richest art,
The painter's thought, the sculptor's dream,
Relic of all the wide world's mart
Blazoned beneath the moonlight's gleam.

The sweetest songs old poets sung,
And life's dread, grimmest tragedies
About these haunted galleries hung,
Enriched with elfin melodies.

For by some magic to me known
I stole of music's saddest art,
From Pan's wild note, Boetian blown,
To Paganini's haunted heart.

Yea, mine alone, all this was mine,
To dwell with splendid dreams alone,
And own a majesty divine,
Amid a marvelous world of stone.

When one strange night I entered in
And found a wondrous spirit there,
That smote the moonlight pale and thin,
With silvern magic sad and rare.

So radiantly beautiful,
It filled my mansion with new light,
And bloomed a warmth across the cool,
Pale, lonely hauntings of the night.

So mystical, it stayed unstirred,
And gazed with awful eyes divine,
Across the human dreams that blurred,
Into this tranced soul of mine.

And ever since with inborn sight,
Like opening of love's inward rose,
Or vast uncurtaining of night,
My heart a mighty sorrow knows:

A Titan sadness, like the sea,
That moans and beats for evermore
To break its manacles, and free
Its spirit from the iron shore.

From night to night the years go on,
The ruined seasons sink and rise;
And still that spirit, never flown,
Looks at me from its wondrous eyes.

And I must drink, undying pain,
The love, the hate, the joy, the smart;
And feel forever, like a chain,
Earth's agony in my haunted heart.

The Last Prayer

MASTER of life, the day is done;
My sun of life is sinking low;
I watch the hours slip one by one
And hark the night-wind and the snow.

And must thou shut the morning out,
And dim the eye that loved to see;
Silence the melody and rout,
And seal the joys of earth for me?

And must thou banish all the hope,
The large horizon's eagle-swim,
The splendor of the far-off slope
That ran about the world's great rim,

That rose with morning's crimson rays
And grew to noonday's gloried dome,
Melting to even's purple haze
When all the hopes of earth went home?

Yea, master of this ruined house,
The mortgage closed, outruns the lease;
Long since is hushed the gay carouse,
And now the windowed lights must cease.

The doors all barred, the shutters up,
Dismantled, empty, wall and floor,
And now for one grim eve to sup
With death, the bailiff, at the door.

Yea, I will take the gloomward road
Where fast the arctic nights set in,
To reach the bourne of that abode
Which thou hast kept for all my kin.

And all life's splendid joys forego,
Walled in with night and senseless stone,
If at the last my heart might know
Through all the dark one joy alone.

Yea, thou mayst quench the latest spark
Of life's weird day's expectancy,
Roll down the thunders of the dark
And close the light of life for me.

Melt all the splendid blue above
And let these magic wonders die,
If thou wilt only leave me, Love,
And Love's heart-brother, Memory.

Though all the hopes of every race
Crumbled in one red crucible,
And melted mingled into space,
Yet, Master, thou wert merciful.

Unabsolved

A Dramatic Monologue

This poem is founded on the confession of a man who went with one of the expeditions to save Sir John Franklin's party, and who, being sent ahead, saw signs of them, but through cowardice was afraid to tell.

O FATHER, hear my tale, then pity me,
For even God His pity hath withdrawn.
O death was dread and awful in those days!
You prate of hell and punishment to come,
And endless torments made for those who sin.
Stern priest, put down your cross and hearken me;—
I see forever a white glinting plain,
From night to night across the twinkling dark,
A world of cold and fear and dread and death,
And poor lost ones who starve and pinch and die;—
I could have saved them—I—yea, even I.
You talk of hell! Is hell to see poor frames,
Wan, leathery cheeks, and dull, despairing eyes,
From whence a low-flamed madness, ebbing out,
Goes slowly deathward through the eerie hours?
To hear forever pitiless, icy winds
Feel in the shivering canvas of the tent,
With idle, brute curiosity nature hath,
While out around, one universe of death,
Stretches the loveless, hearthless, arctic night?

This is my doom, it sitteth by my side,
And never leaves me through the desolate years.
Go, take your hell to men who never lived,
Save as the slow world wendeth, sluggish, dull.

Even they must suffer also, poor bleak ones,
Then is your feeble comfort nothing worth.
You tell me to have hope, God will forgive.
O priest, can God forgive a sin like mine?
You say He is all-loving, did He lie
With me that night amid the eyeless dark,
And writhe with me, and whisper, "Save thyself,
'That way to north lies cold and age and death,
And awful failure on men's awed tongues,
To linger years hereafter; Southward lies
Home, heat and love, and sweet, blood-pulsing life,—
Life, with its morns and eves and glad to-morrows,
And joy and hope for many days to be?"

Did He, I say, lie with me there that night,
And know that awful tragedy beyond,
And my poor tragedy enacted there?
Then must He feel Him since as I have felt,
And live that hideous misery in His heart.
And, knowing this, I say unto thee, priest,
He could not be a God and say, forgive.
You plead my soul's salvation the one end
And aim of all my thought; then hearken, priest,
For this my sin hath made me more than wise:—
That seems to me the one great sin I sinned
In selling all to save mine evil self.

Stay, hearken, priest, and haunt me not with hopes
As futile as those icy-fingered winds
That stirred the canvas there that arctic night.
I bid thee hark and mumble not thy prayers
Like August bees heard in a summer room,
That drone afar, but keep them for the dead,
The dull-eared dead who sleep and heed them not.

You say the Church absolves, you speak of peace;
You talk of what not even God can do,
Be He but what you make Him. In my light,—
And mine is light of one who knows the case,
The facts, the reasons, and hath weighed them too,—
There is but one absolver, the absolved.

For I, since that far, fatal arctic night,
Have been alone in some dread, shadowy court,
Where I was judge and guilty prisoner too.
Words, words are empty; were life built on words,
How rich the poor would grow, the weak be strong,
The hateful loving, and the scornful weak!—
The king would be a peasant, and the poor
A king in his own right; the murderer, red
From his foul guilt, would pass to God's own breast,
And all damned things, long damned of earth's consent,
And some dread law much older far than we,
Would blossom righteous under heaven's face.

Still fared we north across that frozen waste
Of icy horror ringed with awful night,
To seek the living in a world of death;
And as we fared a terror grew and grew
About my heart like madness, till I dreamed
A vague desire to flee by night and creep,
By steel-blue, windless plain and haunted wood,
And wizened shore and headland, once more south.
There, as we went, the days grew wan and shrunk,
And nights grew vast and weird and beautiful,
Walled with flame-glories of auroral light,
Ringing the frozen world with myriad spears
Of awful splendor there across the night.
And ever anon a shadowy, spectral pack

Of gleaming eyes and panting, lurid tongues
Haunted the lone horizon toward the south.

Long day by day a desolation went
Where our wan faces fared, o'er all that waste;
And I was young and filled with love of life,
And fear of ugly death as some weird black,
The enemy of love and youth and joy;
A lonely, ruined bridge at edge of night,
Fading in blackness at the outer end.
And those were cold, stern men I went with there,
Who held their lives as men do hold a gift
Not worth the keeping; men who told dread tales,
That made a madness in me of that waste
And all its hellish, lonely solitude,
And set my heart abeating for the south,
Until that awful desolation ringed
My reason round, and shrunk my fearful heart.
Yea, Father, I had saved them but for this;—
Why did they send me on alone, ahead,
Poor me, the only weak one of that band,
Who was too much of coward to show my fear?
Why did life give me that mad fear of death,
To make me selfish at the very last?
Why did God give those men into my hand,
And leave them victim to a craven fear
That walked those lonely wastes in form of man?

No, Father, take your cross, mine is a pain
That only distant ages can out-burn.
Forgiveness! No, you know not what you say;
You churchmen mumble words as charmers do,
And talk of God and love so glib and pat,
And think you reach men's souls and give them light,

When all the time my spirit is to you
A land unfound, a region far-removed,
Where walk dim ghosts of thoughts and fears and pains
You never dreamed of. What know you of souls
Like this of mine that hath girt misery's sum
And found the black with which God veils His face?

Then hearken, priest, and learn thee of my woe,
For I have lain afar on northern nights,
By star-filled wastes, and conned it o'er and o'er,
And thought on God, and life, and many things,
And all the baffling mystery of the dark.
And I have held that awful rendezvous
Of naked self with self alone and bare,
And knew myself as men have never known;—
Have fought the duel, flashing hilt to hilt,
And blade to blade, of flesh and spirit there,
Until I lay a weak and wounded thing,
Like some poor, mangled bird the sportsman leaves
Writhing and twisting there amid the dark.

You talk of ladders leading up to light,
Of windows bursting on the perfect day,
Of dawns grown ruddy on the blackest night.
Yea, I have groped about the muffled walls,
And beat my spirit's prison all in vain,
Only to find them shrouded fold on fold;
And still the cruel, icy stars look down,
And my dread memory stayeth with me still.

It was a strange, mad quest we went upon,
To seek the living in the lifeless north.
For days, and days, and long, lone, loveless nights,
We set our faces toward the arctic sky,

And threaded wastes of that lone wilderness,
Beyond the lands of summer and glad spring,
Beyond the regions kind of flower and bird,
Past glint horizons of auroral gleams,
A haunted world of winter's wizened sleep,
Where death, a giant, aged, and stark and wan,
Kept fast the entrance of those sunless caves
Where hides the day beyond the icy seas.

Then life ebbed lower in the bravest heart,
And spake the leader, "If in ten more days
We chance on nothing, then will we return,
And set our faces once more to the south."
For that dread land began to close us in,
With cold and hunger, bit at our poor limbs,
Till life grew there a feeble, flickering flame,
Amid the snows and ice-floes of that land.
Then ten days crept out shrunk and grey and wan,
With nothing but the lonely, haunted waste.
Then spake the leader, "If in five more days!"
Then parcelled out those five grey, haggard days,
While life to me grew like an ebbing tide,
That surged far out from some dread death-like strand.
And horror came upon me like the night,
That seemed to gird the world in desolate walls.
Then spake the leader, "If in three more days!"

But when the third day waned we came, at last,
Unto the shores of some dread, lonely sea,
That gloomed to north and night, and far beyond,
Where ruined straits and headlands loomed and sank,
There seemed the awful endings of the world.

Then spake the leader, "Let us go not yet,
But stay a little ere we turn us south,

Perchance, poor souls, they might be somewhere here.”
And then to me, “You go, for you are young
And strong, and life throbs quickest in your veins,
And you have eyes more strong to see, for ours
Are dimmed by the dread frost-mists of this land;
And creep out there beyond yon gleaming ledge,
And bring me word of what you there may see.
And if you meet no sign of mast or sail,
Or hull or wreck, or mark of living soul,
Then we will turn our faces to the south;
For this great ocean’s vastness hems us in,
And death here nightly creeps from strand to strand,
And binds with girth of black the gleaming world.”

Then, whispering “Madness, madness,” to the dark,
I crept me fearful o’er that gleaming ledge,
And saw but night and awful gulfs of dark,
And weird ice-mountains looming desolate there,
And far beyond the vastness of that sea.
And then—O God, why died I not that hour?—
Amid the gleaming flocs far up that shore,
So far it seemed that man’s foot scarce could go,
The certain, tapering outline of a mast,
And one small patch of rag; and then I felt
No man could ever live to reach that place,
And horror seized me of that haunted world,
That I should die there and be froze for aye,
Amid the ice-core of its awful heart.
Then crept I back, the weak ghost of a life,
A miserable, shaking, confined fear,
And spake, “I saw but ice and winds and dark,
And the dread vastness of that desolate sea.”
Again he spake, “Creep out once more and look;
Perchance your sight was misled by the gleam.”
And then once more I crept out on that ledge,

And saw again the night and awful dark,
And that poor beckoning mast that haunts me yet;
And as I lay those moments seemed to grow,
As men have felt in looking down long years,
And there I chose "'twixt evil and the good,"
And took the evil; then began my hell,
And back I crept with that black lie on lips,
And spake again, "I only saw the night,
And those weird mountains and the awful deep."
At that he moaned and spake, "Poor souls! poor souls!
Then they are doomed if ever men were doomed."
Whereat a sudden, great auroral flame
Filled all the heaven, lighting wastes and sea,
And came a wondrous shock across the world,
Like sounds of far-off battle where hosts die,
As if God thundered back mine awful lie,
And I fell in a heap where all was black.

When next I lived, we were full three days south,
And two had died upon that dreadful march;
Then memory came, and I went laughing mad,
But kept mine awful secret to this hour.

No, priest, you can do nothing; pain like mine
Must smoulder out in its own agony,
Till there be nought but ashes at the last.
But something 'mid the pauses of the dark
Doth teach me that I am not all alone;
For I have dreamed in my dread, maddest hour,
An awful shadow, blacker than my black,
Went ever with me. Harken to me now:
I never felt a hand or saw a face,
I never knew a comfort more than sleep,
The winters they are only barren snows,
And age is hard, and death waits at the last.

But I have felt in some dim, shapeless way,
As memories long remembered after youth,
That back of all there is some mighty will,
Beyond the little dreams that we are here,
Beyond the misery of our days and years,
Beyond the outmost system's outmost rim,
Where wrinkled suns in awful blackness swim,
A wondrous mercy that is working still.

Return No More !

RETURN no more, O splendid sun,
Sweet days come back no more :
Bring back no more the budding hours,
The springtime to my door.

The calling bird, the wakening brook
Make mock upon mine ear :
For she who loved them with me then
Went out with yesteryear.

Fold, fold the year for aye in snows,
Howl, Winter, by my door :
For she, my rose, my bloom of life,
Is snow for evermore.

The Lyre of the Gods

HAUNTED, alone, withdrawn, in some dread spot,
Remote from men and all their burdened way,
There is a lyre whereon the mad winds play
The sad old songs of dead gone yesterday;
Those splendid dreams of olden eld forgot,
'Mid all the world's loud fray.

It holds all chords of those forgotten tunes,
Those great weird dreams of peoples lost and gone,
Their pride and passion, all their olden woe,
Long past and vanished. Now these strings upon
Only the winds of unremembering blow,
Where erstwhile sang the gold of Attic dawn,
Sad tragedy, or splendid epic glow.

Ages ago great Homer sought this place,
And thundered on its strings the world's old woes
Of gods and men, and smote in golden hours
Of mighty song those rich eternal throes
Of Helen and of fallen Ilium's towers.
Euripides in dreams here sought the base,
Sombre and great, of Greek dramatic song,
In saddest notes of ancient woe and wrong.

Mantuan Virgil, honey in his mouth,
Sang to its chords in eclogues languorous,
Of Tityrus' beeches, and the wet warm south;
Or with Æneas wrecked the world again,
Dying anew in dart of Dido's pain.

Stern Dante came and smote its chords in woe,
So deep and dark, high heaven and hell between,
That nature shuddered, hell from deeps below
Leaped up in anguish of her lurid sheen.
Here rang his song immortal, to the air,
Bemoaned dead Beatrice on its silvern strings,
That splendid woe beyond all woe's compare,
In sonorous dirge of death's imaginings.

Shakespeare the mighty, loftiest of our days,
Here ran the subtle gamut of all things,
Uttering the human heart and its weird maze
Of love and hate and hope and dread despair,
Those woes all hearts have sighed unto the air,
Until from out its molten notes there ran
The godlike, golden melody of man,
And Song, enfranchised, from her wintry ban,
Rose larklike, heavenward on ethereal wings.

Milton, epic splendor of our tongue,
The dew of poesy on great heart and lips,
Smote here his lofty notes in Titan song
Of mighty Lucifer in dark eclipse
Of high ambition's failure headlong flung.

And he of Ayr, old earth's immortal child,
Found its rare chords attuned to his hot heart,
And smote a note across the world's bleak wild,
Ennobling amid its frenzied smart.

Here later came in mad or holy mirth,
A motley crew attuned to earth's old song;
High Coleridge, subtlest spirit of his kind,
Shelley, child of heaven, like the wind,
In joy or passion, kissing, spurning earth;

Keats, sad Greek of fated alien birth;
Wordsworth, gentle shepherd of the mind;
And rarest of all this rare belated throng,
Sad Byron, mighty child of music's saddest wrong.

Now its great chords are silent; seldom now
The lonely wanderer touches its dead strings,
He of the honeyed mouth and fated brow,
Waking anew the world's imaginings;
For gold and grim ambition hold men's hearts,
All life is sordid, and a maddened cry
Goes up like smoke from its great throngèd marts,
Where Truth lies slain of Mammon's deadly darts,
And Love and Beauty, clip of their rare wings.

Only the winds of Autumn, sonorous, sad,
Thunder in discords strange its strings among,
Ringing the vibrant note of some old mad
Forgotten chord or surgent battle song:
Some weird lost passion, hatred, love or woe,
Wherewith the dead world loved, or slew its foe,
Or thrilled to splendor when its heart was young.

The Soul's House

LIFE, one by one, you sealed to me
Each room in this weird house of mine,
Sacred to love's glad sanctity,
Filled with youth's memories divine.

First you did seal those chambers glad
That opened on a garden wild,
When all the winds of heaven were mad
About the vague mind of the child.

Yea, ages now it seems ago,
I left the magic of those rooms,
Turning those ponderous hinges slow,
To deeper mysteries, stranger dooms.

Till time's grey corridors outgrew,
To marble sculpture, mighty glow
Of all earth's genius fretted through,
With earth's old tragedy of woe.

Then I traversed dim, ancient halls,
Ruins of time's rememberings,
That rusted on their mighty walls
The memories of a thousand kings.

Chaldea, Egypt, here looked down
From hideous heads and shadowed wings,
Till all the drowsed air seemed to drown
In sense of awful whisperings.

Athens, austere, of snowy dome
And frieze of marble, seemed to wait;
And all the eagled spears of Rome
Did clang their bronzed arms at the gate.

And then I went and left that past,
Dread vision of heads and columns and
spears,
And awful hush and tumult vast
That haunt me down the haunting years.

Orpheus

LONG ago a sweet musician,
On a Thracian plain at noon,
In the golden drowse of summer
Played so heavenly a tune:

That the very hills and forests
To its chords their audience lent.
And the streams were hushed to listen
To this wondrous instrument.

And stilled was all the murmur
Of sweetest winds at noon,
And babbling brooks along their beds
Hushed their melodious tune.

The gales that from the ocean came
To kiss the summer lands,
Fell dying at the harmony
That floated from his hands.

And youth forgot its passion,
And age forgot its woe,
And life forgot that there was death
Before such music's flow.

And there was hush of laughter,
Where sported youth and maid,
And those who wept forgot their tears
While such sweet notes were played.

Yea, life was stayed a season,
Ambition, Greed and Crime,
And Hate and Lust crept shuddering, 'neath
The curtain folds of time.

And war in its 'mid battle hushed
Upon the 'sanguined plain,
The sword and spear uplifted 'mid
The slayer and the slain.

While even the gods of heaven sank
From their divine abode,
Drawn downward by the magic dreams
That from his fingers flowed.

Glen Eila

(A Highland Ballad)

CRADLED in loneliness, splendor and clouds,
Where the grim mountains lift up their headlands,
Hushed in its rain-mists, walled from the world,
Dreams the glad vale of Glen Eila.

Lone are its hills to the edge of the world,
With their brows flame-tipped with the heather,
Till down the hushed noonday are heard the dead feet
Of the clansmen who once trod the heather.

But it's far, far the day, and it's long the long weeks,
Looking back down the years with their sorrow,
Since love lingered here and gleamed on the cheeks
Of Mahri, the dream of Glen Eila.

The touch of the morning, the sound of the brook,
In her face and her voice set me dreaming;
Till it seemed the wild grandeur of glenside and peak
But existed to frame her eyes' gleaming.

She comes once again when the night winds sob in
Round the sad, wintry curve of the mountains.
And I know her sweet ghost like a dream from the past,
Welling up from out the heart's fountains.

Two little clasped hands, two pleading soft eyes
Looking up to me, true, in the twilight,
And the stir of a leaf, where the shy, watchful wind
Went past—God help and forgive me.

O the evil of youth and the madness of youth,
And the curse of this world with its dragon
Of callous grim form and its mock of a heart,
That crushed my sweet flower of Glen Eila!

I saw my proud mother, my father so grim,
With his twenty grim lord-lines behind him:—
And I put by her hand, and lost what this world
Hath sweetest of gift in its giving.

I could not tell all, how could I explain
To so pure and so trusting a spirit?
But I put her love by with a poor shifty lie,
And fled from my heart and Glen Eila.

O she dreamed on the slopes, and she gazed far to sea,
And she looked long to mountainward waiting,
Till the wistful eyes dimmed, and the trusting heart
broke
In the tryst of the years in Glen Eila!

Till a slumber more kind than the heart of a man
Took her peaceful at last to its keeping:
And the stars peep at night, and the mountains look
 down
On the grave where my dead love is sleeping.

My henchmen are many, my castle walls old,
And my station the pride of my people;—
But I put it all by, with this world and its lie,
And I long for the slopes of Glen Eila.

I long for the bracken, the blue slopes of heather.
The purpling peaks in the twilight;
And a far away voice, and a long vanished face,
That gleams from the slopes of Glen Eila.

And oft when I weary of statecraft and rout,
And the simper of dame and court-lady;
I wander, in dreams, to the heatherhill gleams,
And the glen that I trod with my Mahri.

And I see her sweet face, and I touch her soft hand,
And the years roll back with their shadow
Of dim dreary days to those God-given hours
When I wandered the slopes of Glen Eila.

O the grim, heavy years, O the sad, thievish years,
That steal all our youth and our gladness!
Would they but bring to me, through their dream and
 their dree
Nepenthe to life and its madness:—

Till I stand once again, 'mid the sun and the rain,
Where the mountains slope down with their heather;—
While the long years they pass, like the wind in the
 grass,
With Mahri and love in Glen Eila.

The Betrayed Singer

THERE came a singer through the world,
The world of grim to-day,
The fire of life was on his lips
And in his heart the May.

He sang a golden song of love,
Of truth and truth's desire,
And flung a majesty of might
From his alluring lyre.

He came to where the cliques of song,
Life's grim Sanhedrim dwelt;
They hated him because of all
The truth he sang and felt.

They hated him and cried him down,
Because they saw in him
The lark in heaven, sweet and clear,
That made their singing dim.

They slew him with their evil tongues,
Their artful, false disdain,
And life lost all that joy and hope
That should have been its gain.

They drove him from the doors of hope,
The gates of human fame,
Until in dusk of evil spite
He died without a name.

His melody went fading out,
Till under heaven's bars
His mighty music sobbed and sank,
And melted to the stars.

Then in his place they set them up
False gods of tinsel show,
Poor helot, soulless, mumming mock
Of mighty long ago.

And built them temples born of art
Upon an evil time,
When gold and power and pelf were prized,
And rhyme was only rhyme.

And starved the yearning sons of God
Of beauty, love and truth,
And gave them stones who asked for bread,
In dread and shameless ruth.

How long, O Life, this mighty ill,
This reign of hate? How long
Permit to dree their evil weird,
Earth's murderers of song?

Nature Verse

Nature

NATURE, the dream that wraps us round,
One comforting and saving whole;
And as the clothes to the body of man,
The mantle of the soul.

Nature, the door that opens wide
From this close, fetid house of ill;
That lifts from curse of street to vast
Receding hill on hill.

Nature, the mood, now sweet of night,
Now grand and splendid, large of day;
From vast skyline and cloudy towers,
To stars in heaven that stray.

Nature, the hope, the truth, the gleam,
Beyond this bitter cark and dole:
Whose walls the infinite weft of dream,
Whose gift is to console.

The Home of Song

HERE in northern solitudes,
Sounding shorelands, glooming woods,

Where the pines their dreams rehearse,
Is the home of haunting verse.

Dreams of beauty here inspire
All the summer's radiant fire,

In the gleam of leaf and bird,
Ere the Autumn's voice is heard,

Fluting, soft, her woodland tune
Down the golden afternoon.

Where the seaward ships go down,
By some ancient Norman town;

Where the northern marshes lie,
Golden under azure sky;

Where the northern woodland glooms,
Luminous in leafy rooms,

With its ancient, sunlit wine,
Under smoke of dusky pine:

Here the soul of silence broods,
Under haunted solitudes;

Here that spirit rare and pure,
Of the muses who endure,

Dreams with Wisdom's quiet eye,
While the phantom years go by.

Where far sunlands shine and drowse,
And great leafy, golden boughs,

Swaying, pendulous, within
A sleep, diaphanous and thin,

Answer to the drowsy mind,
And loiterings of the thoughtful wind:

Here in seasons lone and long,
The spirit rare of northern song

Keeps in dreams, remote, apart,
The cadences of her own heart.

Higher Kinship

THERE is a time at middle summer when,
In weariness of all this saddening world,
The simple nature aspects seem to me
As a close kindred, sweet and kind and true,
Giving me peace and comfort, and a joy
Not of the senses, but of the inward soul.
The restful day, the sunny leaf and wind,
The patch of blue like windows shining down,
Do give to life a beauty and a calm
And a sweet sadness, that this mighty world
And all its myriad triumphs cannot give.

O let me live with Nature at her door,
And taste her home-brewed pleasures, simple, glad;
The beauty of day, the splendor of the night;
Not in great palace halls, great cloister domes,
The smoke of cities and the thronging din;
But out with air and woodlands, shining sun;
These my companions, this my roof, my home!

Wind

I AM Wind, the deathless dreamer
Of the summer world ;
Tranced in snows of shade and shimmer,
On a cloud scarp curled.

Fluting through the argent shadow
And the molten shine
Of the golden, lonesome summer
And its dreams divine.

All unseen, I walk the meadows,
Or I wake the wheat,
Speeding o'er the tawny billows
With my phantom feet.

All the world's face, hushed and sober,
Wrinkles where I run ;
Turning sunshine into shadow,
Shadow into sun.

Stirring soft the breast of waters
With my winnowing wings,
Waking the grey ancient wood
From hushed imaginings.

Where the blossoms drowse in languors,
Or a vagrant sips,
Lifting nodding blade or petal
To my cooling lips ;

Far from gloom of shadowed mountain,
Surge of sounding sea,

Bud and blossom, leaf and tendril,
All are glad of me.

Loosed in sunny deeps of heaven,
Like a dream, I go,
Guiding light my genie-driven
Flocks, in herds of snow;—

Ere I moor them o'er the thirsting
Woods and fields beneath,
Dumbly yearning, from their burning
Dream of parchèd death.

Not a sorrow do I borrow
From the golden day,
Not a shadow holds the meadow
Where my footsteps stray:

Light and cool, my kiss is welcome
Under sun and moon,
To the weary vagrant wending
Under parchèd noon:

To the languid, nodding blossom
In its moonlit dell,
All earth's children sad and yearning
Know and love me well.

Without passion, without sorrow,
Driven in my dream,
Through the season's trance of sleeping
Cloud and field and stream;—

Haunting woodlands, lakes and forests,
Seas and clouds impearled,
I am Wind, the deathless dreamer
Of the summer world.

Earth

MYSTICAL ash of all being,
Tomb and womb of all time,
Healing, destroying, upbuilding,
Receiving, riving apart;
Cool and warm for rest,
Or hot for burgeoning life;
Clod; yet pulsate with being;
Infinite, ever recurring,
Dark, sad house of all joy.

Night that dawns in the bud
Whose perfect day is the flower;
Earth, red mantle of ruin,
Beautiful shroud of decay,
Marriage bed of the cosmos,
Love that gives and receives,
Nubian nurse of all beauty,
Swart, ultimate fondler of joy;
Out of thy bosom all come,
Back to thy bosom return,
Where, in thy mystical chambers,
Purified, sifted, restored,
All life, dismantled, out-worn,
Obeys the inevitable law.

Red Egypt rose from thy dust;
Greece, thine ineffable bloom,
Child of thy magical beauty,
Woke like a lotus at dawn.

All the mad might of the ages,
Their sad fated beauty, their joy,
Their passionate hopes and despairs,
Arose from thy bosom, and back
To thy yearning bosom return.

And thou, Swart Mother, O Wise!
Thou to thy children wert kind.
Thou smoothedst the saddest of brows,
Held to thy breast all lovers,
Folded their beauty of limb,
As thou dost fold to thy rest
Thy rarest and fairest of bloom.

And never undaunted spirit
Trod like a god thy rime,
But thou gavest him splendid rest,
Where in thy sepulchered chambers,
Thy great imperishable sleep,
Those kings of thy heart's best joy.

Snow

Down out of heaven,
Frost-kissed
And wind-driven,
Flake upon flake,
Over forest and lake,
Cometh the snow.

Folding the forest,
Folding the farms,
In a mantle of white;
And the river's great arms,

Kissed by the chill night
From clamor to rest,
Lie all white and shrouded
Upon the world's breast.

Falling so slowly
Down from above,
So white, hushed, and holy,
Folding the city
Like the great pity
Of God in His love;
Sent down out of heaven
On its sorrow and crime,
Blotting them, folding them
Under its rime.

Fluttering, rustling,
Soft as a breath,
The whisper of leaves,
The low pinions of death,
Or the voice of the dawning,
When day has its birth,
Is the music of silence
It makes to the earth.

Thus down out of heaven,
Frost-kissed
And wind-driven,
Flake upon lake,
Over forest and lake,
Cometh the snow.

Snowfall

Down drops the snow, the fleecy hooding snow,
On town and wood and haggard, wind-blown space,
And hushes the storms, and all weird winds that blow
Upon the world's dead face.

Like the great rest that cometh after pain,
The calm that follows storm, the great surcease,
This folding slumber comforts wood and plain
In one white mantling peace.

So when His winter comes, His folding dream,
His calm for tempest-tost and Autumn-lorn;
'Twill gently fall, as falls by wood and stream
His snows this winter morn.

The Dryad's House

THIS cool and glooming summer wood
Is wise and silent in its mood,

Forever moving in its dream
Of breathing leaf and sunny gleam.

Whatever voice within is heard,
Of stir of leaf or whirl of bird;

Without, its trance is ever one
Of breathing sleeping shade and sun.

The gleaming gold of summer fields
Dreams through its green of leafy shields,

And windows of the shining wind,
With grey trunks looming dim behind,

Grotesque and ancient ; all their peace
The dreams of gods of olden Greece ;—

As though in ages long ago,
Before their dreams began to grow,

Some startled, fleeing dryad hid
Within this leafy coverlid,

Enmeshed her silvern reveries here,
And filled its shadows with her fear,

And all the woodland mind inwrought
With golden filagree of thought

And maiden fancies, pensive spun,
From purpled skeinings of the sun,

Woven on sunbeam-shuttled looms,
Dim, luminous, of these leafy rooms.

August

A SPIRIT of one rare mood, of one high dream,
She stands with finger on lip in this great hush
Of distant hill and wood and field and stream,
As one who harkens to the hermit thrush
By some grave gateway, large, of evening dream;

And harkening, lingers, hearing in the sound
The beauty and grief of all the great dead years;
So hushed and rapt is all the world around
In that sweet sadness too remote for tears,
But felt in all this beauty of summer swound.

Far out, earth's mighty waters, down the day
Are strung to mystic cadence; dim, removed
The wind's low litanies; and far away
The softest sounds of summer, mute, reproved
By this rare silence of the enraptured day.

Only the inward breathings of the leaves
In woodlands; sigh of subtlest summer sleep;
That magic charm which earth's high dream achieves,
As those great eyes in mystic trance drink deep,
And that great breast alternate joys and grieves.

Cape Eternity

(A Giant Promontory on the Saguenay River, Quebec)

ABOUT thy head where dawning wakes and dies,
Sublimity, betwixt thine awful rifts,—
'Mid mists and gloom and shattered light, uplifts
Hiding in height the measure of the skies.

Here pallid Awe forever lifts her eyes,
Through veiling haze across thy rugged clefts,
Where far and faint the sombre sunlight sifts,
'Mid loneliness and doom and dread surmise.

Here nature to this ancient silence froze,
When from the deeps thy mighty shoulders rose,
And hid the sun and moon and starry light;—
Where based in shadow of thy sunless floods,
And iron bastions, vast, forever broods,
Winter, eternal stillness, death and night.

The Mystery

WHAT is this glory nature makes us feel,
And riots so sweet within us? Can it be
That there with man is kindred mystery
Of being, old heredity
Of bud and leaf, of pulsing plant and tree,
And earth and air; that in some olden speech,—
Ere words had being—doth our spirits reach:
Some essence akin to music, subtle, deep,
That plumbs our souls as dreams melt through
our sleep?

Yea, it must be: for often unto me
A fallen leaf hath greater power to stir
Than mighty volumes of earth's history,
Or all the tragedy of life's great blur.
What is it? that so little; plant or flower,
A sunset or a sunrise, gives us wings,
Or opens doors of glory every hour,
To godlike thoughts—and life's imaginings.

Yea, 'tis a greatness that about us lies ;
 Within our touch—pervading air and sod,
 That bounds our being—hidden from our eyes—
 But inward, subtle,—guiding men to God.

Spring

SEASON of life's renewal, love's rebirth,
 And all hope's young espousals, in your dream
 I feel once more the ancient stirrings of earth !

Now in your moods benign of sun and wind,
 The worn and aged, winter-wrinkled earth,
 Forgetting sorrow, sleep and icèd snows,
 Turns joyful to the glad sun bland and kind.
 And in his kiss forgets her ancient woes.

Men scorn thy name in song in these late days,
 When life is sordid, crude, material, grim,
 And love a laughter unto brutish minds,
 Song a weariness or an idle whim.
 The scoff of herds of this world's soulless hinds,
 Deaf to the melody of your brooks and winds,
 Blind to the beauty of your splendid dream.

Because earth's hounds and jackals bay the moon,
 Must then poor Philomel forbear to sing,
 Or that life's barnfowl croak in dismal tune,
 Love's lark in heaven fail to lift her wing?

And even I, who feel thine ancient dreams,
 Do hail thee, wondrous Spring ;
 Love's rare magician of this waking world.

Who turnest to melody all earth's harshest themes,
And buildest beauty out of each bleak thing
In being, where thy roseate dreams are furled.

In thee old age once more renews his youth,
And turns him kindling to his memoried past,
Reviving golden moments now no more,
By blossoming wood and wide sun-winnowed shore;
While youth by some supreme, divine intent,
Some spirit beneath all moods that breathe and move,
Builds o'er all earth a luminous, tremulous tent
In which to dream and love.

All elements and spirits stir and wake
From haunts of dream and death.
Loosened, the waters from their icèd chains
Go roaring by loud ways, from fen and lake;
While all the world is filled with voice of rains,
And tender droppings toward the unborn flowers,
And rosy shoots in sunward blossoming bowers.

Loosened, the snows of winter, cerements
From off the corpse of Autumn, waste and flee;
Loosened the gyves of slumber; plain and stream,
And all the spirits of life who build and dream,
Enfranchised, glad and free!

Far out around the world by woods and meres,
Rises, like morn from night, a magic haze,
Filled with dim pearly hints of unborn days,
Of April's smiles and tears.

Far in the misty woodlands, myriad buds,
Shut leaves and petals, peeping one by one,
As in a night, leafy infinitudes,

By some kind inward magic of the sun ;
Where yestereve the sad-voiced, lonesome wind
Wailed a wild melody of mad winter's mind,
Now clothed with tremulous glories of the spring.

Or in low meadows where some chattering brook
But last eve silent, or in slumbrous tune
Whispering sad melodies to the wan-faced moon,
Like life slow ebbing ; now with all life's dowers,
Goes loudly shouting down the joyous hours.

Wan weeds and clovers, tiny spires of green,
Rising from myriad meadows and far fields,
Drinking within the warm rains sweet and clear,
Put on the infinite glory of the year.

After long months of waiting, months of woe,
Months of withered age and sleep and death,
Months of bleak cerements of icèd snow,
After dim shrunken days and long-drawn nights
Of pallid storm and haunted northern lights ;
Wakens the song, the bud, the brook, the thrill,
The glory of being and the petalled breath,
The newer waking of a magic will,
Of life restirring to its infinite deeps,
By wave and shore and hooded mere and hill ;—
And I, too, blind and dumb, and filled with fear,
Life-gyved and frozen, like a prisoned thing,
Feel all this glory of the waking year,
And my heart, fluttering like a young bird's wing,
Doth tune itself in joyful guise to sing
The splendor and hope of all the splendid year,
The magic dream of spring.

In the Spring Fields

THERE dwells a spirit in the budding year—
As motherhood doth beautify the face—
That even lends these barren glebes a grace,
And fills grey hours with beauty that were drear
And bleak when the loud, storming March was here :
A glamor that the thrilled heart dimly traces
In swelling boughs and soft, wet, windy spaces,
And sunlands where the chattering birds make cheer.

I thread the uplands where the wind's footfalls
Stir leaves in gusty hollows, autumn's urns.
Seaward the river's shining breast expands,
High in the windy pines a lone crow calls,
And far below some patient ploughman turns
His great black furrow over steaming lands.

Renewal

ONCE more the sweet glad springtime
Comes over the lonely land,
And hearts long worn and sorrow-frayed
Are glad for the breezes bland.

ONCE more the warm sun smites the earth
With kindly touch and smile,
And the budding loves are filling the woods
For many a gladdening mile.

AGE and death and sorrow
Go when the torch warms in,
And youth and joy and love and hope
The lone worn spaces win.

And man, the tired wayfarer,
Turns from his grief and toil,
To greet the tender buds, and sweet,
That peep from the burgeoning soil.

Forgot are the ills that smite us,
In hours both lone and lorn,
For the joys of earth have seized the world
In the moods of love reborn.

How long, O mighty Mother,
With thy returning power,
How oft with magic of thy dream
Wilt thou bring back the hour,

Before the great sleep claims us,
Surcease from memory's ill,
When the joy no more with the crocus-bud
And Spring, flames over the hill?

The Dryad

HER soul was sown with the seed of the tree
Of old when the earth was young;
And glad with the light of its majesty
The light of her beautiful being upgrew.
And the winds that swept over land and sea,
And like a harper the great boughs strung,
Whispered her all things new.

The tree reached forth to the sun and the wind
And towered to heaven above.
But she was the soul that under its rind
Whispered its joy through the whole wood's
span,

Sweet and glad and tender and kind;
For her love for the tree was a holier love
Than the love of woman for man.

The seasons came and the seasons went
And the woodland music rang;
And under her wide umbrageous tent,
Hidden forever from mortal eye,
She sang earth's beauty and wonderment.
But men never knew the spirit that sang
This music too wondrous to die.

Only nature, forever young,
And her children forever true,
Knew the beauty of her who sung
And her tender, glad love for the tree;
Till on her music the wild hawk hung
From his eyrie high in the blue
To drink her melody free.

And the creatures of earth would creep from
their haunts
To stare with their wilding eyes,
To hearken those rhythms of earth's romance,
That never the ear of mortal hath heard;
Till the elfin squirrels would caper and dance,
And the hedgehog's sleepy and shy surprise
Would grow to the thought of a bird.

And the pale wood-flowers from their cradles
of dew
Where they rocked them the whole night long,
While the dark wheeled round and the stars
looked through
Into the great wood's slumbrous breast,

Till the grey of the night like a mist outblew ;
Hearkened the piercing joy of her song
That sank like a star in their rest.

But all things come to an end at last
When the wings of being are furled.
And there blew one night a maddening blast
From those wastes where ships dismantle
and drown,
That ravaged the forest and thundered past,
And in the wreck of that ruined world
The dryad's tree went down.

When the pale stars dimmed their tapers of
gold,
And over the night's round rim
The day rose sullen and ragged and cold,
Over that wind-swept, desolate wild,
Where the huge trunks lay like giants of old,
Prone, slain on some battlefield, silent and
grim,
The wood-creatures, curious, mild,

Searching their solitudes, found her there
Like a snowdrift out in the morn ;
One lily arm round the beech-trunk bare,
One curved, cold, under her elfin head,
With the beechen shine in her nut-brown hair,
And the pallor of dawn on her face, love-lorn,
Beautiful, passionless, dead.

A Northern River

WHERE northern forests, dusk and dim,
Loom dark the arctic skies along;
'Mid well-heads of the world abrim,
My swift tides sparkle into song.

By craggy waste, by haunted verge,
With woodland high on woodland piled,
Wherein rude autumn's iron surge
Thundered afar, and smote the wild.

By regions where the night-wind grieves,
Down sunsets red and ruinous,
'Neath crocus dawns and purpling eves,
And midnights lorn and luminous:—

My winding waters swell their tides,
Rocked 'mid the forest's rude unrest,
Where brooks down gleaming mountain sides
Sing, bird-like, brimming to my breast.

By craggy scarp and sheering rock
My shining music curves and cools,
Then leaps with lightning roar and shock
Into a hundred thunder pools.

By cabins in some wood's recess,
By farmlands where the fields slope down;
By busy gleaming villages,
To far-off breath and smoke of town:—

To furnace blast of city's roar,
Where life goes madd'ning to and fro,
In ceaseless murmurs evermore;—
My swift tides eddy in their flow.

Betwixt the lily and the rose
Of dewy night and petalled morn,
When life's dim wonder-gates uncloze,
New glories on my breast are born.

In quiet borders where I sweep,
Housed in their roofs of bloom and sod,
My music singing round their sleep,
The dead lie looking up to God:

In those low homes of love's release,
Where all are foolish, all are wise,
The daisies blooming round their peace,
The dust of sleep upon their eyes.

By dreaming banks my voice grows dumb
In shades of summer sanctity;
And often here glad lovers come
On summer nights, and know with me,—

The under-dreams that throng and bless,
The unspoken, swift imaginings;
The sweetness tongue cannot express,
The happiness at heart of things.

And often little children race
With sunny laughter where I pass,
And kneel and mirror in my face
Their innocence, as in a glass.

Curved, sunny-breasted, where I dream,
Here in and out, then far away,
By snowy surge and amber gleam,
My waters silver into spray.

By lowlands when the noons are still,
And all the world enmeshed in sleep;
Now by a bridge, a ruined mill,
I wake with murmurs, ere I leap

In thunders o'er a craggy ledge,
To churn in surge, then sparkle, free,
In gold, across the world's dim edge,
With wimpling music to the sea.

The Humming Bee

GLAD music of the summer's heart,
Jargoning from flower to flower,
A part of each unconscious hour
Until the happy days depart!

Thou dream-like toiler of the fields!
Each honeyed spot thou knowest well
Where Nature's heart her sweetness yields,
Some ruined trunk thy citadel;
There buidest a home for Winter's hour
In some lone, sunlight-haunted place,
When all the year is at its power,
And June's high-tide on bank and bower
Mirrors in blossoms Nature's face.

At early morn by breathing wood,
Or in some dewy clover dell,
Tuning the young day's solitude,—
Or down the slumbrous afternoon
Rich-freighted, wingest thy tuneful way,
Self-musing, murmurous, musical,
Amid the whole world's dreamy swoon;
Sole voice of all the drowsèd day,
Until the gradual shadows fall:—
Then, by some lonely pasture-fell
At ruddy eve when homeward come
Past deepening shade or fading ray
The weary children of the day,
I hear thy joyous, drowsy hum,
Till stars peep out and woods breathe low,
And sounds of human toil grow dumb,
And Night, the blessed, comes apace,
Bending to Earth's her cooling face,
While airs across the dark outblow:
Then rocked on some glad blossom's breast,
Thou dreamest to rest.

When Summer wanes to Autumn's age,
And come the days of fate and rage,
O happy Humming Bee!
Then wilt thou sink to wintry sleep,
When storms are hoarse along the deep,
In hushed tranquillity.
No more wilt wind thy subtle horn
By dreamy eve or misty morn,
When trees are leafless, pastures shorn.
Ah me! ah me!
Could we, like thee, go down the days
Of summer hush to autumn haze,

Housing, with what we built before,
The gold of all our memory's store
And garnered thought;
So when the bleak December's hate
Beat round the bastions of our fate,
We, wrapt in wealth of honeyed dreams
Of kindlier visions, far-off streams,
Might heed it not.

A Wood Lyric

INTO the stilly woods I go,
Where the shades are deep and the wind-flowers
 blow,
And the hours are dreamy and lone and long,
And the power of silence is greater than song.
Into the stilly woods I go,
Where the leaves are cool and the wind-flowers blow.

When I go into the stilly woods,
And know all the flowers in their sweet, shy hoods,
The tender leaves in their shimmer and sheen
Of darkling shadow, diaphanous green,
In those haunted halls where my footstep falls,
Like one who enters cathedral walls,
A spirit of beauty floods over me,
As over a swimmer the waves of the sea,
That strengthens and glories, refreshes and fills,
Till all mine inner heart wakens and thrills
With a new and a glad and a sweet delight,
And a sense of the infinite out of sight,
Of the great unknown that we may not know,
But only feel with an inward glow
When into the great, glad woods we go.

O life-worn brothers, come with me
Into the wood's hushed sanctity,
Where the great, cool branches are heavy with June,
And the voices of summer are strung in tune;
Come with me, O heart out-worn,
Or spirit whom life's brute-struggles have torn,
Come, tired and broken and wounded feet,
Where the walls are greenening, the floors are sweet,
The roofs are breathing and heaven's airs meet.

An August Reverie

THERE is an autumn sense subdues the air,
Though it is August and the season still
A part of summer, and the woodlands fair.
I hear it in the humming of the mill,
I feel it in the rustling of the trees,
That scarcely shiver in the passing breeze.

'Tis but a touch of Winter ere his time,
A presaging of sleep and icy death,
When skies are rich and fields are in their prime,
And heaven and earth commingle in a breath:—
When hazy airs are stirred with gossamer wings,
And in shorn fields the shrill cicada sings.

So comes the slow revolving of the year,
The glory of nature ripening to decay,
When in those paths, by which, through loves austere,
All men and beasts and blossoms find their way,
By steady easings of the Spirit's dream,
From sunlight past the pallid starlight's beam.

Nor should the spirit sorrow as it passes,
Declining slowly by the heights it came;
We are but brothers to the birds and grasses,
In our brief coming and our end the same:
And though we glory, godlike in our day,
Perchance some kindred law their lives obey.

There are a thousand beauties gathered round:
The sound of waters falling over-night,
The morning scents that steam from the fresh
ground,
The hair-like streaming of the morning light
Through early mists and dim, wet woods where
brooks
Chatter, half-seen, down under mossy nooks.

The ragged daisy starring all the fields,
The buttercup abrim with pallid gold,
The thistle and burr-flowers hedged with prickly
shields,
All common weeds the draggled pastures hold,
With shriveled pods and leaves, are kin to me,
Like-heirs of earth and her maturity.

They speak a silent speech that is their own,
These wise and gentle teachers of the grass;
And when their brief and common days are flown,
A certain beauty from the year doth pass:—
A beauty of whose light no eye can tell,
Save that it went; and my heart knew it well.

I may not know each plant as some men know them,
As children gather beasts and birds to tame;
But I went 'mid them as the winds that blow them,

From childhood's hour, and loved without a name.
There is more beauty in a field of weeds
Than in all blooms the hothouse garden breeds.

For they are nature's children; in their faces
I see that sweet obedience to the sky
That marks these dwellers of the wilding places,
Who with the season's being live and die;
Knowing no love but of the wind and sun,
Who still are nature's when their life is done.

They are a part of all the haze-filled hours,
The happy, happy world all drenched with light,
The far-off, chiming click-clack of the mowers,
And yon blue hills whose mists elude my sight;
And they to me will ever bring in dreams
Far mist-clad heights and brimming rain-fed streams.

In this dream August air, whose ripened leaf,
Pausing before it puts death's glories on,
Deepens its green, and the half-garnered sheaf
Gladdens the haze-filled sunlight, love hath gone
Beyond the material, trembling like a star,
To those sure heights where all thought's glories are.

And Thought, that is the greatness of this earth,
And man's most inmost being, soars and soars,
Beyond the eye's horizon's outmost girth,
Garners all beauty, on all mystery pores:—
Like some ethereal fountain in its flow,
Finds heavens where the senses may not go.

To the Ottawa

Out of the northern wastes, lands of winter and death,
Regions of ruin and age, spaces of solitude lost;
You wash and thunder and sweep,
And dream and sparkle and creep,
Turbulent, luminous, large,
Scion of thunder and frost.

Down past woodland and waste, lone as the haunting of
even,
Of shriveled and wind-moaning night when Winter
hath wizened the world;
Down past hamlet and town,
By marshes, by forests that frown,
Brimming their desolate banks,
Your tides to the ocean are hurled.

Glory of the Dying Day

O GLORY of the dying day!
That into darkness fades away.
O violet splendor! melting down
By river bend o'er tower and town;
O glory of the dying day!
That into darkness fades away.

O majesty of dying light!
O splendor of the gates of night!

That all a molten glory glows,
Till purple-crimson fades to rose,
And dying, melting, outward goes
In ashes on the even's rim
When all the world grows faint and dim.

O silvern sound of far-off bells!
 Ringing, ringing miles away,
Over river fields and fells,
 Round the crimson and the grey:
Peeling softly evening out
 As the dewy dusk comes down,
And the great night folds about
 River, woodlands, hills, and town.

O glory of the fading hills,
 Splendor of the river's breast,
O silence that the whole world fills,
 Sanctity of peaceful rest!
Alien from the care of day,
 Now a petalled star peeps in,
 Now night's choruses begin,
Musical and far away.

O glory of the dying day,
When my life's evening fades away,
May it in splendid peace go down
Like yours o'er river-bend and town;
Not into silence blind and stark,
Not into wintry muffled dark,
 But heralded by stars divine,
May my life's latest evening ray
 Melt into such a night as thine.

Walls of Green

WALLS of green where the wind and the sunlight stir,
Rippling windows of light where the sun looks through,
And spaces of day that widen and blur beyond,
Out to the haze-rimmed, purpled edge of the world.

Aisles whose pavements are etched with ghosts of moving
Leaves and phantom branches rafted above;
Wind-swayed arches rocking under the blue,
Breathing under the dim, stirred peace of the world.

Walls of green skirting the high-built heaven,
Dusky pines, poplars clapping their hands,
Arching elms holding the spaces aloft,
Under the wind-swept, argosied dome of sky.

Walls of green. Under their luminous glooms,
Dim and sweet, the fancies of summer lie,
Sylvan murmurs of sun and leafy shadow,
Music of bird and swaying of tenuous bough.

Under here the haunted heart of summer
Hides in its pensive veilings of tremulous green,
Where the sky peers through and the ruddy eye of the
sun,
Letting the world, remote, and its roar go by.

Here is the realm of fancy, the poet's land,
This house of breathing leaves and summer and sun;
Where the eye is keen for beauty, the ear intuned,
And the hushed heart glad for silence and slumber and
dreams.

And here, chance now and anon when the world is
 stilled,

And life is afar, and earth of her care swept clean,
Do the gods come back as of old in the gold of the world,
And the elfin creatures dance in their sunbeam dreams:

And the high thoughts wake, and the great ones tread as
 of yore,

In olden majesty under these lofty aisles,
Where the woodshade glooms, or the gossamer sunlight
 smiles,

In the strength of the trees or the wide, blue lift of the
 sky.

Yea, here they come to the children of earth as of yore.
Bringing their god-gifts, vision and beauty and lore,
Brimming the world with the old-time effort and joy,
And Titan moods of the old world's golden desire.

Ode to Silence

THINE are the inaudible harmonies that keep
 The brooding breathings of the night's glad lute,
When in those pauses 'twixt her sleep and sleep
 All holy tunes be mute.

All beauteous seasons thou dost guard and bless,
 The tremulous dawn, hushed noon and cooling night,
Earth, air and ocean thy dim palaces
 Filled with divine delight.

The fathomless wells of heaven's deeps are thine,
 Thou watchest over night's infinitudes,

The starry vast, within whose chant divine
No dissonant chord intrudes.

Thine are those oceans, dim, untenanted,
The unprescient homes of pregnancies to be,
Filling the lonely realms of mighty dread
With formless majesty.

Thou keepest the dewy caverns of the night
About majestic risings of the moon,
When over the breathing woods her phosphor light
Rises to silvern noon.

Thou lovest those lonely avenues of light
In the sun-kindled woods at early morn,
Upon the rosy rim of fading night
And cloudy meadows shorn;

Filling the joyous airs with summer fraught,
And morning's slopes with dewy odors bland;
Here with glad Fancy and slow-wingèd Thought
Thou wanderest hand in hand.

Thou holdest those intervals of peace that dwell
About the caverned shores of ocean furled,
When the long midnight hush or noonday swell
Slumbers about the world.

But dearest of all thou lovest that pensive hour,
That holy hour about the fringe of eve,
When sunset dreams in lonely woods have power
Imaginings to weave;—

When all the sunset world seems ages old
In sad romance and achings of dead wrong.
And all the beauty of life is poignant gold
In the hermit thrush's song.

Then down the long, dim memories of old woods
Facing forever the far-westerling sun,
I'd dream for aye through hallowed solitudes
Where magic echoes run;—

Seeking the majesty of peace wherein thou hidest,
Those golden rivers of being without alloy;
Knowing the infinite of dream is where thou bidest,
Thou and that calm joy.

Ode to Thunder Cape*

STORM-BEATEN cliff, thou mighty cape of thunder;
Rock-Titan of the north, whose feet the waves beat
under;

Cloud-reared, mist-veiled, to all the world a wonder,
Shut out in thy wild solitude asunder,

O Thunder Cape, thou mighty Cape of Storms!

About thy base, like woe that naught assuages,
Throughout the years the wild lake raves and rages;
One after one, time closes up weird pages;
But firm thou standest, unchanged, through the ages,

O Thunder Cape, thou awful Cape of Storms!

Upon thy ragged front the storm's black anger
Like eagle clings, amid the elements' clangor:
About thee feels the lake's soft sensuous languor;
But dead alike to loving and to anger,

Thou towerest bleak, O mighty Cape of Storms!

Year in, year out, the summer rain's soft beating,
Thy front hath known, the winter's snow and sleeting:

* Thunder Cape, an immense cliff of basaltic rock, thirteen hundred feet high, guards the entrance to Thunder Bay, Lake Superior.

But unto each thou givest contemptuous greeting.
These hurt thee not through seasons fast and fleeting;
O proud, imperious, rock-ribbed Cape of Storms!

In August nights, when on thine under beaches
The lake to caverns time-weird legend teaches,
And moon-pearled waves to shadowed shores send
speeches;

Far into heaven thine awful darkness reaches,
O'ershadowing night; thou ghostly Cape of Storms!

In wild October, when the lake is booming
Its madness at thee, and the north is dooming
The season to fiercest hate, still unconsuming,
Over the strife, thine awful front is looming;
Like death in life, thou awful Cape of Storms!

Across thy rest the wild bee's noonday humming,
And sound of martial hosts to battle drumming,
Are one to thee—no date knows thine incoming;
The earliest years belong to thy life's summing,
O ancient rock, thou agèd Cape of Storms!

O thou so old, within thy sage discerning,
What sorrows, hates, what dead past loves still-burning,
Couldst thou relate, thine ancient pages turning;
O thou, who seemest ever new lores learning,
O unforgetting, wondrous Cape of Storms?

O tell me what wild past lies here enchanted:
What borders thou dost guard, what regions haunted?
What type of man a little era flaunted,
Then passed and slept? O tell me thou undaunted,
Thou aged as eld, O mighty Cape of Storms!

O speak, if thou canst speak, what cities sleeping?
What busy streets? what laughing and what weeping?

What vanished deeds and hopes like dust upheaping,
Hast thou long held within thy silent keeping?

O wise old cape, thou rugged Cape of Storms!

These all have passed, as all that's living passes;
Our thoughts they wither as the centuries' grasses,
That bloom and rot in bleak, wild lake morasses:
But still thou loomest where Superior glasses

Himself in surge and sleep, O Cape of Storms!

And thou wilt stay when we and all our dreaming
Lie low in dust. The age's last moon-beaming
Will shed on thy wild front its final gleaming;
For last of all that's real and all that's seeming,

Thou still wilt linger, mighty Cape of Storms!

To the Rideau River

ACROSS the peace of all the night's great healing,
Beneath the silence of the dark's hushed deep,
A phosphorescent, ghostly spirit stealing,
You softly slide, a sleep within a sleep.

You slip and shine by boughs that bend to kiss you,
You dream by curvèd banks of shimmering green;
And where you swerve the alien meadows miss you,
But happy are the banks you glide between.

You drift, a solace to the great woods under,
Wimpling wide in many a watery moon;
And when you sing, the hours, in soft-eyed wonder,
Lean, finger on lip, entrancèd by your tune.

Out by dim, hazy shores, in reedy shallows,
The drowsy cattle sun them in the heat;

And, far from woody slopes and ragged fallows,
A lazy wind goes loitering in the wheat.

You fill the summer with your magic, chanting
Your sleepy music out by field and fell;
And spirits elusive in your bosom haunting
Sleep like the genie in the Arabian well.

In low green capes, by country ways descending,
Where your tides wind by many a braided shore,
The great cool elms, the heaven and water blending,
Mirror their ghosts within thy shimmering floor.

By pebbly shoals whereon your tides are driven
In silvery surge and far-heard slumbrous song,
Your sleeping shores and the white hosts of heaven
Hearken your tender droppings all night long.

Where out along the dusk, all white-mist laden,
You cradle deep in wells of azure light,—
Like to the virgin dreams of some sweet maiden,—
In your glad breast the million stars of night.

Across your silver bars whereby you glisten,
Oblivious of the throes of earth's wild mart,
You leap and sing, and then you lie and listen,
As if to hear the throbbing of your heart.

Unfettered child of nature's mirth and gladness,
Sing, sing and drift by field and country way;
Fill earth and men with thy divine, sweet madness,
With glad contentment gird both night and day:

Till care and pain one troublous dream dissolving,
Across the splendor of thy misty bars;
We only know the glorious day revolving,
Night's majesty, and her eternal stars.

The Wind Dancer

WHEN ripened Summer dreams and sleeps,
And her hushed silence teems
With golden gleam of mystic drowse
And silvern trance of dreams;

And all the woods are held in moods
Of slumber sunbeam spun,
There is an elfin dancer, light,
Who dances in the sun.

And stands and claps his shining hands
And bids the mirth move on
Of some invisible, mystic rout
The slumbrous day upon.

And they, the revellers, dim, unseen,
Who chase his phantom mood;
Perchance the naiads of the stream,
The dryads of the wood.

For when a wind-breath wakes the world
And stirs each drowsèd tree,
Like magic silver works his bow
In fiddlings merrily.

And all his elfin revellers dance
By glint of wood and stream,
Till all the drowsèd day about
Goes dancing in his dream.

And when in shrouded moonlight glooms
The woodland sighs and frets,

Along the snowy dream he shakes
His silvern castanets.

Till phantom creatures of the night,
Shy satyrs, gnomes and fauns
Foot to his music mad and sweet
Along the mossy lawns.

He is the master of the mirth
Of field and stream and tree;
And of the dreamers of the wood,
The lord of revels, he.

Till Summer and her dream depart
And leaf and gleam be done,
He holds the whole world's laughing heart,
This dancer in the sun.

Winter

OVER these wastes, these endless wastes of white,
Rounding about far, lonely regions of sky,
Winter the wild-tongued cometh with clamorous might;
Deep-sounding and surgent, his armies of storm sweep
by,

Wracking the skeleton woods and opens that lie
Far to the seaward reaches that thunder and moan,
Where barrens and mists and beaches forever are lone.

Morning shrinks closer to night, and nebulous noon
Hangs, a dull lanthorn, over the windings of snows;
And like a pale beech-leaf fluttering upward, the moon
Out of the short day wakens and blossoms and grows,

And builds her wan beauty like to the ghost of a rose
Over the soundless silences, shrunken, that dream
Their prisoned deathliness under the gold of her beam.

Wide is the arch of the night, blue spangled with fire,
From wizened edge to edge of the shriveled-up earth,
Where the chords of the dark are as tense as the strings
of a lyre

Strung by the fingers of silence ere sound had birth,
With far-off, alien echoes of morning and mirth;
That reach the tuned ear of the spirit, beaten upon
By the soundless tides of the wonder and glory of dawn.

The stars have faded and blurred in the spaces of night,
And over the snow-fringed edges wakens the morn,
Pallid and heatless, lifting its lustreless light
Over the skeleton woodlands and stretches forlorn;
Touching with pallor the forests, storm-haggard and
torn:

Till out of the earth's edge the winter-god rises acold,
And strikes on the iron of the month with finger of gold.

Then down the whole harp of the morning a vibration
rings,
Thrilling the heart of the dull earth with throbbings
and dreams

Of far-blown odors and music of long-vanished Springs;
Till the lean, stalled cattle low for the lapping of
streams,

And the clamorous cock, to the south, where his dung-
hill steams,

Looks the sun in the eye, and prophesies, hopeful and
clear,

The stir in the breast of the wrinkled, bleak rime of the
year.

The Spring Spirit

I, POOR Satyr in the glade,
Saw a wonder, half afraid,
When the year at leafy time
Held all essences at prime;
Knew a miracle of dream
By wide sward and azure gleam,
Soft upon a breathing day,
When all earth, expectant, lay,
Worn of Winter, answering
To the vast awakening,
Where the woodland yearned afar
To a dream of drifting star.

When the lonely days were done,
And those magic ones had spun
All the woodland in a lace
Over coy earth's hidden face;
Knew a presence like a wind,
Soft at Summer, or a kind
Dream of dawning round the sky,
Rosy over hillroofs high.

Saw a vision, half a mist,
Pearl and glowing, cloudland kissed,
Saw a vision, heard a voice,
Bidding all earth's kin rejoice,
Like as leaves are lightly stirred
By a passing wind or bird.

Held a vision of a face
Peering out of purple lace,

Subtle weft of morns and eves,
 Fair as Summer when she grieves
 O'er her tender deaths of love,
 Bending burgeoning earth above;
 Lips of beauty, eyes of dream,
 In whose opalescent gleam
 All the hopes of earth and sky
 And visions sweet of life did lie.
 In this wonder-joy I grew
 Swift to mood of bird and blue,
 Sweet, this dream of life to scan,
 Love, immortal—baptized, man.

In the Strength of the Trees

LORN, hooded woodlands, wintry, bare,
 Against the wild November sky;
 With what hushed patience, in your care,
 You let the biting blast go by.

It roars like madness round the world,
 And strikes you like a shoreward sea,
 Soon far its pinions rude are hurled,
 And you, erect and free.

Beneath the comfort of your sere,
 Bleak dream of loud November woe,
 The frail, fair children of the year
 Are cradled in your heart's warm glow.

There sheltered 'neath your iron might,
 That fronts the icy wolfhound's breath,
 The hopes of all the year lie light,
 In frosty dream of death.

I, too, have felt the wintry rage
And tooth of rude, unkindly fate;
Would that I might its blasts engage,
Like you, possess my soul and wait:—

Like you, in patience, meet the storms
Of life's November's surge and stress;
Strong 'gainst its ill of iron alarms,
Tender toward its great helplessness.

So build my life like yours above
Earth's dream of frail futurity,
In all that godlike strength that love
Ordained that it should be.

Autumn

SEASON of languorous gold and hazy drouth,
Of nature's beauty ripened to the core,
When over fens far-calling birds wing south,
Filling the air with lonesome dreams of yore,
And memories that haunt but come no more;
Maiden of veiled eyes and sunny mouth,
Dreaming between hushed heat and frosted lands;
With fire-mists in thine eyes, and red leaves in thy
hands.

Spirit of Autumn, siren of all the year,
Who dost my soul with glamouries entwine;
As some old trunk, deep in the forest drear,
Is gloried by some crimson, clinging vine;
So thou dost fill my heart with haunted wine,
When in the still, glad days by uplands sere,

With slow-drawn pace, I seek thy slumbrous moods,
In thy hushed, dreamy haunts of fields and skies and
woods.

How often in the still, rich frosted days,
Down the slow hours of some tranced afternoon,
Have my feet wandered in a mad, sweet maze,
Hunting the wind that, like some haunting tune,
Peopled with memories all the great, gold swoon
Of rustling woodlands, streams and leafy ways,
Ever eluding, fluting, sweet, before
Fading to rest at last in gold-green leafy core.

Far out beside some great, hill-cradled stream,
Winding along in sinuous blue for miles,
By tented elms, in fields that sleep and dream,
Low marsh-lands where the warm sun slopes and
smiles,
Where through the haze the harsh grasshopper files
His rasping note, the pallid asters gleam,
And golden-rod flames in the smoky light,
While far, blue fading hills in mists elude my sight.

Or out in maple woods where companies
Of sombre trunks lift the soft light between,
And little sunbeams steal with ruddy eyes,
Sifting adown the canopies of green;
Spirit of sadness, here you move unseen
Down tented avenues where the long light lies
From morn till even, through the silent hours,
Where over all the day frets through in sunny showers.

On silent nights, grey mists creep near the ground,
And airs are keen and stars grow sharp and clear,

And phantom frosts steal in and make no sound
Down the long, haunted river, bleak and drear,
Biting with death the sedges dank and sere,
And ever the wan moon rises large and round
Over the woodlands, flooding with icèd dream
The far-hushed, ghostly face of wood and field and
stream.

On frosty mornings in the crimsoning woods;
Or where the long, low grassy meadows shine,
Wimpling and steaming out through hazy moods
Of dewy glories to the far sky-line;
And pearly brooks, a company divine,
Go, softly chattering, under smoky hoods;
I love to walk abroad and con with you
Dream thoughts that are most sad and beautiful and
true.

The Journey

THE wind of the day blows downward
From the moor and the far lone height;
And sinks to rest on the brooding breast
Of the hushed and mothering night.

The river sweeps from the mountain
To find its peace in the sea;
But O, my heart, thou must yearn on
To all eternity.

Restless, unsatisfied, longing,
Evermore doomed to roam;
For thou hast gone on a journey long
To those hills of the soul's far home.

The Message of Night

I STAND beneath the night's wide vast,
The awful curtains, dim, out-rolled;
And know time but a tempest blast,
And life a thing the hand may hold—

A thing the Nubian, Dark, may shut
In his closed palm-grasp, black and rude,
Like dust in a kernel of a nut
'Mid vasts of night's infinitude.

And Reason whispers: Why debate
A moment's thought, why breathe this breath?
For all are gone, the low, the great;
And mighty lord of all is Death.

Yea, Egypt built her ruined dream,
And Greece knew beauty's perfect bliss,
Then Science fanned her taper gleam—
And all for this, and all for this:

That when the fires of time burned out,
The earth a barren ball should roll,
With wrinkled winter wrapt about,
And night eterne from pole to pole.

And all the dreams of seers and kings,
The pomps and pageants of the past,
The loves and vain imaginings.
Ground into glacial dust at last.

Ah! no such creed, my soul, for thee,
As, underneath the night's wide bars,
They speak with love's infinity—
God's wondrous angels of the stars.

And something in my heart—some light,
Some splendor, science cannot weigh—
Beats round the shores of this dim night
The surges of a mightier day.

Though all the loves of those who loved
Be vanished into empty air,
Though all the dreams of ages proved
But wrecks of beautiful despair,

Though all the dust of those who fought
Be scattered to the midnight's main,
No noble life was lived for naught;
No martyr death was died in vain.

The Dream Divine

Who hath no moods for beauty doth not know
The inward greatness of this moving world.
My heart was troubled with the care of life
And mine own driven nature, when I came
Out to a place where 'mid the roofs of trees,
A single gleam, the evening sky shone through
In simple beauty, and it seemed as though
Once more as in the child-like olden days
When earth's folk dreamed God's windows
opened wide
And let in heaven. Thus it seemed to me,

For on my soul a sweetness and a calm
Fell like a mantle; and the joy of one
Who hearkens to inward music; all the world
Seemed in an instant changed: the garish streets
Were no more common; even the woes of men
Assumed a greatness, and mine own dread care
Grew dim, remote, a part of yesterday.
It is a marvel how this magic works,
That nature hath such influence over men,
To raise them from the common, and redeem
The soul from sordid evils, lift to beauty,
Build o'er our life a splendid weft of dream,
By one small rift of dawn or night divine.

Titan

TITAN—he loves a breezy hill
Away above us in the clouds,
Where sun and wind are never still,
And fold it round with misty shrouds.

He loves the great world stretching out
Into dim sky; he loves the flowers
And trees, the brooks that laugh and shout;
And often he will sit for hours

And gaze into the distant rim
Of all things made of earth and air,
That rounds the horizon vague and dim,
Until his great, deep eyes do wear

A look of awe, in thoughts of One,
Invisible, Eternal, Great,

Who built from out the burning sun
This glorious world with all its state.

And through the clouds, that like a crown
Of snow encircle his hill's great head,
Sometimes the sun in peering down
Will find him sleeping on his bed

Of clover lawn, with blossoms that strew
Themselves like love, and round him wave;
And all the night the winds blow through
His dreams as through a cave.

Brawny, huge-limbed, in frame and mind
True type of man, in heart a boy,
Who loves the music of the wind,
Who yet is innocent in joy.

Whose heart is not a cavern of doubt
And dark foul hates, with passions rife;
His dreams are all of flowers about,
His life is part of nature's life.

Though great in strength of manly form,
His heart is truest tenderness;
Strong as the spirit of the storm,
Soft as the rain-drops when they press

With cooling lips the parchèd flowers
That peer like young birds from their nest,
Mouths gaping for the much-loved showers,
That cool and nourish Nature's breast.

And there I know he sits at dawn,
Fresh from his cave of sleep, with eyes
Clear as the sky above, the lawn
Resplendent with a thousand dyes.

A line of red that lights the east
And widens over sky and sea
In purple and gold, and snowy fleeced,
Where mountain peaks loom high and free.

And when pale May with tears the earth
Has watered, and the rosier June
To balm and bloom has given birth,
And strung the world to rarest tune,

Then I shall hie to 'Titan's hill
Where far above among the clouds
The sun and wind are never still,
But fold it round with misty shrouds.

And there 'mid lawns and grassy nooks,
The great world stretching far below,
Here, far from men and care and books,
Where only streams of nature flow.

And he shall teach me, he who drinks
Where nature's fountains brimming run,
Who forged in thought the burning links
That bind the great zones of the sun.

Whose nightly torches are the stars
That look with ever-trusting eyes
Across the midnight's gloomy bars.
And he will make me strong and wise.

Morning

WHEN I behold how out of ruined night
Filled with all weirds of haunted ancientness,
And dreams and phantasies of pale distress,
Is builded, beam by beam, the splendid light,
The opalescent glory, gem bedight,
Of dew-emblazoned morning; when I know
Such wondrous hopes, such luminous beauties
 grow
From out earth's shades of sadness and affright;

O, then, my heart, amid thy questioning fear,
Dost thou not whisper: He who buildeth thus
From wrecks of dark such wonders at his will,
Can re-create from out death's night for us
The marvels of a morning gladder still
Than ever trembled into beauty here?

The Earth-Spirit

DOWN these golden uplands, I
Move with sunny winds and sky,
Where the ghosts of waters are,
To the gates of dusk and star.

And I know that as I go,
She whose bosom is the snow
Of the birch and aspen tree,
Dreams these sunny dreams with me.

She whose glance and gleam of hair
Are the ruddy spinning, rare,

Of the gold glint of the sun
In the wood when day is done ;

She whose inner speech is heard
In the hush of wind and bird,
And whose soul is as a star
Cradled where the hill-lakes are.

Rododactulos

THE night blows outward in a mist,
And all the world the sun has kissed.

Along the golden rim of sky,
A thousand snow-piled vapors lie.

And by the wood and mist-clad stream,
The Maiden Morn stands still to dream.

The End of the Furrow

WHEN we come to the end of the furrow,
When our last day's work is done,
We will drink of the long red shaft of light
That slants from the westering sun.

We will turn from the field of our labor,
From the warm earth glad and brown,
And wend our feet up that village street,
And with our folk lie down.

Yea, after the long toil, surcease,
Rest to the hearts that roam,
When we join in the mystic silence of eve
The glad procession home.

The Pageantry of Death

ONCE more, once more, with fateful sombre tread,
The wheeling year brings splendid Autumn in,
Hushed with sad dreams of memory and the dead,
And icy touch of Winter sere and thin :
Slowly with thoughtful pace the hours go round
While, leaf by leaf, the year slips faltering to the
ground.

With what a glory lifts the morning light
O'er mists and dreams beyond the dripping woods,
Where ambering brooks steal under wakening night,
Mirroring in mists the year's bright moods
Of morning, peace and life and leafy glow ;
Soon, soon, too sadly soon, ghost-wound in ghostly snow.

Down past the rich, ripe splendors of the year,
The glad days pale and sadden to the Fall,
Loosening, as memory lets go tear by tear,
The sweet old thoughts, the dreams beyond recall ;
The splendid hopes, the joys, the golden gleam,
That now fade out in mists beyond the hills of dream.

And now when nights grow old and days decline,
And veiled September glories all the world
With those glad lights of Autumn's hues divine,
By hill and stream in azure vapors furled,
Over the earth a solemn rapture flows
Of death's sad doomful march where all that's mortal
goes.

To him who, wandering o'er the upland fields,
Or by some noonday shrunken slumbering stream,

Where reverie her sweetest visions yields

In realms of inward thought and reverent dream,
There comes a sense of sadness undefined,
That speaks in each dead leaf, or whispers down the
wind.

All day far out across the azure hills,

The splendid ruined woods all wrecked with rains,
Or river reaches, where the distance fills,

With wine of softness, all the haze-lit plains;
And lonely uplands where some garrulous jay
Reverberates his note along the lonesome day;

Here 'mid these austere glories of the year,

The spirit of lofty sadness dwells alone:
Where, hushed, the lorn heart grieves without a tear,
In this high house where winds like ocean moan;
Or wild-blown sunsets, where bleak woodlands sway
About the dying borders of the splendid desolate day.

So fades September. Down each country lane,

Where withered the summer in the late August days,
And weeds, once radiant, drenched of wind and rain,

Now bronzed and ragged, linger along the ways;
Here aster and gentian lift their fringed blue.
Like some sweet second summer, the haze-filled sunlight
through.

Near and afar by wood and field and stream,

There sleeps an eerie mantle of misty light,
Transforming all, building this mid-day dream.

Like some ghost-phantom of the pale moonlight;
Where all the distance islanded in a breath,
Seems some illusion built from out the fogs of death.

Soon, soon, too soon, this pageantry will pass;
And all the gaudy garments the world puts on,
Of crimsoning leaf, and mists and bronzed grass,
Like some magician's dream, be vanished and gone;
Leaving the year a hollow iron urn,
Wherein no more love's fires do glimmer and leap and
burn.

Nor should we sorrow more than sadness ought,
Nor grieve to tread this abbey of life's years;
Is there not splendid beauty in the thought
That we have such great endings of our tears;—
That very Nature puts her glories on,
In these sad haunted days, for all her bright ones gone.

Even as we dream, in maddening rage doth rouse
Old lorn October, storm bloused, Autumn blown;
Roaring like ocean upon this ruined house,
Shaking in thunders its desolate splendors down;
Till not one leaf goes shuddering in its flight,
Where build in icy caverns the windy fires of night.

An October Evening

THE woods are haggard and lonely,
The skies are hooded for snow,
The moon is cold in heaven,
And the grasses are sere below.

The bearded swamps are breathing
A mist from meres afar,
And grimly the Great Bear circles
Under the pale Pole Star.

There is never a voice in heaven,
Nor ever a sound on earth,
Where the spectres of winter are rising
Over the night's wan girth.

There is slumber and death in the silence,
There is hate in the winds so keen;
And the flash of the north's great sword-blade
Circles its cruel sheen.

The world grows agèd and wintry,
Love's face peaked and white;
And death is kind to the tired ones
Who sleep in the north to-night.

To the Blackberry

I FIND thee by the country-side,
With angry mailed thorn;
When first with dreamy woods and skies
The summer time is born.

By every fence and woodland path
Thy milk-white blossom blows;
In lonely haunts of mist and dream,
The summer airs enclose.

And when the freighted August days
Far into autumn lean,
Sweet, luscious, on the laden branch,
Thy ripened fruit is seen.

Dark gypsy of the glowing year,
Child of the sun and rain,
While dreaming by thy tangled path
There comes to me again

The memory of a happy boy,
Barefooted, freed from school,
Who plucked your rich lip-staining fruit.
By road-ways green and cool,

And tossed in glee his ragged cap,
With laughter to the sky;
Oblivious in the glow of youth
How the mad world went by;

Nor cared in realms of summer time,
By haunts of bough and vine,
If Nicholas lost the Volga,
Or Bismarck held the Rhine.

O time when shade with sun was blent,
So like an April shower,
Life has its flower and thorn and fruit,
But thou wert all its flower.

When every day Nepenthe lent,
To drown its deepest sorrow,
And evening skies but prophesied
A glorious skied to-morrow.

O, long gone days of sunlit youth,
I'd live through years of pain,
Once more life's fate of thorn and fruit
To dream your flower again.

Before the Dawn

ONE hour before the flush of dawn
That all the rosy daylight weaves,
Here in my bed, far overhead
I hear the swallows in the eaves.

I cannot see, but well I know
That out around the dusky grey,
Across dark lakes and voiced streams,
The blind, dumb vapors feel their way.

And here and there a star looks down
Out of the fog that holds the sea
In its embrace, while up the lands
Some cock makes music lustily.

And out within the dreamy woods,
Or in some clover blossomed lawn,
The blinking robin pipes his mate
To wake the music of the dawn.

A Winter's Night

SHADOWY white,
Over the fields are the sleeping fences,
Silent and still in the fading light,
As the wintry night commences.

The forest lies
On the edge of the heavens, bearded and brown;
He pulls still closer his cloak, and sighs,
As the evening winds come down.

The snows are wound
As a winding sheet on the river's breast,
And the shivering blast goes wailing round,
As a spirit that cannot rest.

Calm sleeping night!
Whose jewelled couch reflects the million stars
That murmur silent music in their flight—
O, naught thy fair sleep mars.

And all a dream—
Thy spangled forest in its frosty sleep,
Thy pallid moon that sheds its misty beam
O'er waters dead and deep.

Dawn in the June Woods

WHEN over the edge of night
The stars pale one by one,
And out of his streams of light
Rising, the great red sun

Lifteth his splendors up
Over the hush of the world,
And draining night's ebon cup,
Leaveth some stars impearled,

Still on its crystal rim,
Fading like bubbles away,
As out of their cloud-meadows dim,
The dawn winds blow in this way:

Then bathed in cool dewy wells,
Old longings of life renew,
Till here in these morning dells
The dreamings of earth come true:

As up each sun-jewelled slope,
Over the night-hallowed land,
Wonder and Beauty and Hope
Walk silently hand in hand.

September in the Laurentian Hills

ALREADY Winter in his sombre round,
Before his time, hath touched these hills austere
With lonely flame. Last night, without a sound,
The ghostly frost walked out by wood and mere.
And now the sumach curls his frond of fire,
The aspen-tree reluctant drops his gold,
And down the gullies the North's wild vibrant lyre
Rouses the bitter armies of the cold.

O'er this short afternoon the night draws down,
With ominous chill, across these regions bleak;
Wind-beaten gold, the sunset fades around
The purple loneliness of crag and peak,
Leaving the world an iron house wherein
Nor love nor life nor hope hath ever been.

Indian Summer

ALONG the line of smoky hills
The crimson forest stands,
And all the day the blue-jay calls
Throughout the autumn lands.

Now by the brook the maple leans
With all his glory spread,
And all the sumachs on the hills
Have turned their green to red.

Now by great marshes wrapt in mist,
Or past some river's mouth,
Throughout the long, still autumn day
Wild birds are flying south.

Song

WHEN the morning lifts in light
Over misty wood and stream,
And from heaven's azure height
Falls the silence like a dream;—
Then the joy-bird on his tree
Pipes of love and hope to me:
(Wake up rose of morning.)

When the noonday lies in light
Over woodland hill and deep,
Fleecy cloudlands furled in flight,
Over fields enmeshed in sleep:—

Then the sad-bird pipes to me
Songs of days that used to be:
 (Red my rose of dreaming.)

When the evening dies in light
 Down the purple miles of dream,
Lost in jewelled shoals of night,
 Where a myriad glories gleam:—
Then the death-bird pipes to me
From the shadow of his tree:—
 (Fold my flower for sleeping.)

Autumn Leaves

BRIGHT gloried children of the year's late splendors,
 By the wild night-wind strewn;—
Not like mere hues of some poor painter's colors
 Upon a palette thrown:—

But something fairer, gladder, greater, fashioned
 By that dread, unseen hand
Of Him who loosens His storms, unfolds His
 blossoms;—
The might of sea and land.

On this grey autumn morn of haunted sadness,
 All wrecked of wind and rain;
You give to me a glad ecstatic vision,
 A high exquisite pain.

Glad leaves, all ruddy, russet, green and golden,
 Across my pathway hurled,
You bring a dream of nature's rarest beauty
 Into this barren world.

And through my heart there glows a sense of greatness,
Of visions,—splendid, vast;
Given by you, glad children of the woodland,
Upon my spirit cast.

Winnowed by winds of night, far-blown and shaken,
Storm-lashed, where great boughs swayed;—
As I walk here, you seem a magic pavement
By the wild midnight laid.

And with an inward sense of mystic beauty
That stirs and thrills my blood,
You lift me to a higher, truer kinship,
Bright brothers of the wood.

Elegiac and Memorial Verse

Victoria

ROLL out earth's muffled drums, let sable streamers
flow,

And all Britannia's might assume her panoply of woe!
Love's holiest star is gone;

Wind wide the funeral wreath;
For she, our mightiest, hath put on
The majesty of death.

Roll forth the notes of woe,

Let the baleful trumpets blow

A titan nation's titan, heartfelt throe;

'Mid age and storm and night and blinding
snow,

Death, the pale tyrant, lays our loftiest low.

Like some fair mask of queenly sleep she lies,

The mists of centuries in her sightless eyes,

This august woman; greatest of earth's great;

Who ruled this splendor, held this Empire's fate,

And built this purity and white of love's supreme estate.

Low, like a lily broken on its stem,

Passed all her glory, filched her diadem,

She sleeps at His weird bidding who saith, Peace!

And all the loud world's mighty roar is hushed in love's
surcease.

Song is an echo; lore an idle tale;

Love but the yearning of white lips that wail;

Woe but the weeping of wild autumn rain;

Power but the transient gust of angered main.

Thus fades all glory. But her lofty life,

That long gold summer as mother, monarch, wife;

These bide and stay, 'mid wrecks that pass away,
Beyond the mutability of our poor day,
To live when power is swept,

And pomp but clay in clay.

Greater than greatness, stronger than iron power,
That makes earth's Neros grim, her Cæsars dower;
Hers was the gift to girdle isles of peace
With woman's nobleness and love's increase.

The century rang with might of sword and flame
And coarser moods. Amid its blight she came,
And love grew purer, life a holier name;
Religion graver, deeper; happiness,
A part of character to aid and bless;
And softer grew life's heart of bitterness.
Man's faith grew godlier, chivalry arose,
With virtue white as winter's winnowed snows;
And art and song awoke from sorrow's long repose.

From heart of suffering life and conscience went
On higher dreams of love and action bent;
Self-sacrifice from her pure convents came,
And sweetened life of half its bitter blame;
Till cynic scorn crept out in love's
White banishment of shame.

So calm she sleeps in her great southern isle,
Wrapt round in silence drear of stormy death,
No more for her wide earth or heaven will smile,
Or southern ocean breathe his balmy breath;
No more for her the love of child and friend,
Memory of old happiness gone before,
The calm, serene, of life's long peaceful end;
Sweet day, glad night, for her, no more! no more!

The rose of England, red, will burst in bloom ;
The lark in meadows rise as she hath risen ;
The heart of springtime break its wintry gloom,
And life its iron prison ;

And far in Scotland, loved of her and him,
Her nearest, dearest ; laverocks will sing ;
And loch and mountain clothe their glories, dim,
With joy of leaf and wing—
But she no more will mourn her warriors dead.
Roll forth the muffled drum ! The mighty will
That worked for others, brain and heart are still ;
The august spirit, queenly soul is fled !
Death, king of monarchs as of meaner men,
Thundered her palace, o'er the drawbridge crept,
Filched life's rare coffer, stole earth's pearl ; and then,
She gravely smiled and slept.

For us remains the grief, the pain, the woe,
The anguish, sorrow and the boding heart ;
For her, the mighty peace of those who go
Forth from a nobler part.

From all earth's shores one mighty grief is heard ;
Each zone remote, in tryst of sorrow wed ;
The Briton's love, the alien spirit stirred—
Earth's great heart bleeding for earth's mighty dead.

Far hid from us, in veils of love, supreme,
She knows now, gloried, what she prayed before ;
Storming love's fortress, for that one star-beam,
God-given to mortals wandering on this shore,
Where earth-mists thicken into perilous night,
She greets her august line of long and kindly might.

Wise, lofty Alfred, first of her great line
To build those laws by which she ruled so well;
Heroic Richard; and, like some Undine,
The fated Mary, both of heaven and hell;
Great Edward; Henry; Charles of fateful death;
And greatest of all her high and storied line,
Rare, great Elizabeth!
These greet her, ghostly, on that shadowed beach,
Beyond our human tears and woe of human speech.

Above all praise of ours, undying fame,
Like sun on mountain, aureoles her white brow.
We cry in darkness, creep to whence we came,
Our little sorrows and our fleeting show,
With all that crumbles whereunto men go;
But hers a splendor will endure when time
And age have wrinkled up to shriveled scroll,
The fame of fames above all fame sublime,
The fair white memory of a woman's soul.

Great Cæsars, Alexanders, spoil a world,
Enslave whole coasts, crush mighty peoples down;
But greater greatness where love's flags are furled,
Than wreck of earth's renown:—
Her woman's kindness lightened all earth's seas,
And drew to her by silken cord of love,
What tyrants dread, in grim old centuries,
Could not compel by might of iron glove.

Not Shakespeare's art such majesty might wear;
Not Cromwell's spirit linked to lofty cause;
Not Bonaparte could with her might compare;
Her greatness lay in being what she was,
Higher than genius, might or kingly bays—
The queenliest queen, the noblest woman-soul
Of all earth's mighty days!

Yea, she is gone who ruled but yesterday,
Her pomp, her power, her glory, but a name!
Not for its greatest will this mad world stay.
New dreams arise, new gods for love's acclaim,
New fames, new prophets. Kings, as lesser clay,
Are but the dead, gone, faded dreams

Of dead, gone yesterday.

Life feeds on life, earth's glories wane and die,
Her mighty Sidons and her vaunted Tyres!
Her far-flamed beacons and her baleful fires;
Only her noble actions never die.
These bide and stay when names of seers and kings
Are but the ashes of forgotten things,
Hid 'mid the moth and rust of earth's imaginings.

But she will live when we and all our time
Are gathered to the dread and blinding past,
A mighty dream for mighty-built rhyme,
The golden age of Britain's splendid prime,
Remembered when old glories, long that last,
Are blown as shriveled autumn wreck

Upon the age's blast.

Yea, she will live, and tales of her pure life,
Her toil for others, her wise woman's love,
Her heart of sorrow 'mid the jar and strife,
Her noble wifehood, faith in heaven above,
Her simple trust in love from day to day:
Yea, these will bide, while peoples pass away
With all that puts its trust

In pomp of human clay.

Soon, with majestic rite, and earth's wide sorrow,
(Great lady of the pure and lofty crown!)
Will Britain, weeping, lay her sadly down,
To wait a brighter dawn, a happier morrow,

In that rare tomb with that rare soul to sleep,
In God's glad rest for all who wait and weep.

And days will pass, and men will come and go,
And love and hate and sorrow dream, alas!
And all this world and its wild wraith of woe
Unto the wrack of all the ages pass;
And greatness be forgot and dreams decay,
And empires fade, and great souls pass away;
But she will linger in her people's love,
As autumn lingers gilding winter's snows,
Or sunset, fading purpled peaks above,
Leaves golden trails of glory as he goes.

So will she fade not, nor her honor pass,
But burgeon on and grow to one white fame,
While lark in heaven lifts from England's grass,
And heart of England leaps to nobler flame.

The Dead Poet

(Lowell)

DEAD he lies at Elmwood,
Who sang of human fortitude;
Who voiced the higher, clearer way
By which all nobler spirits may
Rise to the rims of God's pure light
Over the edges of earth's night;
Who sang of manhood's highest best,
Like some sweet Arnold of the West,
With more of kinship in his blood
With the great struggling human brood.

With more of lyric in his note,
More of the clarion in his throat,
Tunèd to the brawnier West,
He sang the songs our men love best.

He woke new longings in the heart
For that love-hungered, better part;
He stripped religion of her creeds,
And showed beneath the withered reeds
And dead old grass husks, bleached and sere,
The streams of God's love running clear.
In humor's ink he dipped his pen,
And mirth stirred in his fellowmen;
That larger, healthier, kindlier mirth,
That kindles in great souls of earth.
His was the mind of reverence,
Too great to give the soul offence.

This was the poet, simple, true,
Who all things glad for brothers knew;
With clear eyes knew the kings of earth
Beneath the husks of common worth;
Who never grew too learned to know
The hope of earth in heaven's bow;
Who never grew too old to feel
The sap of springtime upward steal;
Who never grew too worldly wise
To see with purer, childward eyes;
Too human to be merely good,
This great soul dead at Elmwood.
The song of life was on his lips,
True human to the finger tips,
With heart that pulsed and pulsed again,
A man, he loved his fellowmen,

This singer of all singers, who
To the young, strong republic true,
Voicing earth's people in the van,
Most manly, strong, American!

Yes, he is dead, as men know death,
Who count our living by the breath
That ebbs or flows. Yes, he is dead.
With morning's blush, or evening's red,
No more upon this earth will walk;
No more in human page, or talk,
Will he delight, or teach his kind,
Who love the glad lore of the mind.
But till the last despair is fled,
The last weird cell untenanted,
The last sweet hope athwart the dark
Vanishes in meteor spark;
While love of earth and man lives on,
And God and hope ahead are gone
To lead the way to loftier truth.
And earth rejuvenates her youth;
Till earth her latest blossom gives.
The heart of Lowell breathes and lives;
His Launfal learns the godlier way,
His dandelion casts its dusty ray,
His "Zekle" knows eternal youth;
As long as love, and hope, and truth,
As long as bloom, and pulse of blood,
He lives in earth's eternal good
Who now lies dead at Elmwood.

OTTAWA. August, 1891.

Summer Death

(A Nature Monody—in Memory of the Hon. Arthur Rupert Dickey)

I.

SPLENDOR on splendor moves the summer world,
Its days of beauty and its hours of thought
And lofty vision. Over fields unfurled
And these hushed woods with sunlit dreams inwrought
Comes life's far promise. He alone is not.
No more he comes, the grave, the wise, the kind,
To share as once of yore love's treasures of the mind.

How fills the silence with the year's great love,
This golden precinct of her liberties;
There is no breath in earth or heaven above,
Save stir of winds or whispering lisp of trees,
Or chirp of bird or murmurous drone of bees:—
In spirit might he stands alone with us,
To hark her under-song, so hushed, so tremulous!

This is the world he loved, this home of tree
And grass and flower and far unsounded sky:
His joy and quiet passion alone to be
Abroad with nature in her tranquillity,
When she nor all her train gave care a sigh:—
Far, far from life's loud thunder or its grief,
To stray in thought, alone, with flower and bud and
leaf.

This was his world, his leafy summer home,
The woods he prized with quiet student eye.
But where is he who gazed upon the dome

Of unflecked heaven and let man's world go by;
Its strident note tumultuous, shrill and high,
And left the dreams of ermined Senate hall,
To note her sunbeams dance, her silvern waters fall?

Where hath he soared, to what far heights of dream?
Grave Summer sobs his name among her boughs;
And grieves him far by ocean loud, or stream,
Quiet of woodlands; where the shimmering brows
Of aspens fleck the waters with their snows,
Happy and laughing; or the vagrant wind
Haunts the high darkling wood like some unquiet mind.

So grieves or laughs the Summer; me alone,
Sadness unending and misty grief attends,
By sunny field and where his pine-trees moan,
Or soft conferring of his woodland friends:—
For me alone grey Sorrow her brow unbends,
And shows her eyes, those orbs whose haunted glooms
Hold ever in their depths the year's eternal dooms.

II.

O day of thought! O day of splendid dreams!
Where through these sunny glades the ghost winds walk,
Making a melody of the leafy gleams:
And overhead the ravens call and flock
To incantations, where the pine-trees rock;—
While far above from golden moorings high,
The sun's white ancient barges drift down the azure sky.

But he is gone. No more, no more, alas!
Will he revisit these familiar scenes
By peaceful haunts of waters or of grass;

No more amid the summer's gold and greens,
A shadow with the silent shadows pass,
Revolving inward thoughts of days to be,
As one who reads life's book of God's futurity.

III.

Wide walls of elm trees, etched against the skies!
Far lofty aisles of summer majesty!
Where cool at morn the wandering winds arise;—
Lean low your sighings to moan his death with me,
Whose life, high-reaching like a skyward tree,
Cut in the forenoon of its splendid prime,
Fell thundering on the slopes of shuddering time;—

Lean low and teach me of your summer peace,
A peace of heart that nature alone receives
From out the treasures of her love's increase:
Give me your balm of dreams and whispering leaves;
And all that magic mighty summer weaves
From out her shimmer and shade and inward dreams
Of deep embosomed woods and sunward glinting
streams!

In thunders of trade the loud world moves along,
By granite avenues of its iron roar:—
And men, unmoved by melody of song,
Toil like poor ants to pile the world's great store
Of largesse rich by wave and sounding shore;—
Beauty and thought, unheeded, 'reft, alone,
Dream here unmindful of the world's far moan.

But he hath vanished, only yesterday,
'Mid rude alarm of earth's loud battle-drum,
And all the century's latest hours astray,

In doubt and mutterings of dread wars to come;
Now he, the strong, the wise, is stricken dumb.
At time's iron gates, while friend or foeman weeps,
Unmindful of our woe and strife of life, he sleeps.

IV.

Grey gates of memory and the mournful mind!
Dim aisles of sadness and of pensive thought!
Like touch of winter in the summer wind,
Your dream of life with dreams of death is fraught!
I feel your sadness though you murmur not,
Where flute your reveries in love's woodland tune,
Down hollow, golden slopes of haunted afternoon.

Here in your glades where sunbeams interlace,
My dreams are all for him who dreameth not,
Whose sleep is hidden in some sacred place,
Some solemn, lonely, love-devoted spot,
Dedicate to tears and saddened thought,
Where sleep the dead who rest remote alone,
Where Fundy's thundering surges beat their mighty
monotone.

Here bide no sorrows, those grim shadowed glooms,
Those sleepless torturers of the human mind,
Alien to these luminous leafy rooms,
Whose only tenant is the laughing wind
Mindless of the days and hours behind,
Wandering 'mid boughs and blossoms tremulous,
Dead to all earth's ills and griefs that torture us.

V.

This cool, sweet, summer-breathing Sabbath morn,
The very winds of heaven are filled with peace;
Such restfulness upon their wings is borne

Of motion wherein action seems to cease;—
And life breathes on its slow-drawn measured lease;—
Low sighing airs, cool skies, and lisping leaves,
A summer lute whereon the stately season grieves.

On such a morn, enisled in summer dreams,
All sadness sinks to peace; a peace that holds
The spirit in a trance as fields and streams
Are held within the day's dim shining folds;
And as these woodlands in their greens and golds
Stand hushed in trance of wind and leaf and bird:
So we, too, stand and hark for nature's larger word.

And it is meet that here in such an hour,
When all the world is tuned to love's low psalm,
The heart should dream of him whose spirit's power,
Whose whole true strength was islanded in calm,
Like some reef-island of far summered palm,
Hidden in peace from out those ruder seas
Where rage the baser hates of life's mad destinies.

So wrapt in strength he garnered from within,
So isolate in peace he stood apart,
A solitary headland in the din
And maddened roar of all our angered mart,
Alien from the mob and mad upstart,
Serene and reticent, from all the world
Of party-strife and its loud passions hurled:—

A hater of that sordid horde who sneak
And cringe and crawl to favor's lap unclean;
A silent patriot not afraid to speak
The saner word amid the mobs of spleen,
He stood alone, and chose that golden mean
Of wisdom's place 'twixt each extremity
Of brutal bigot spite and blind antipathy.

So like this limpid morning grew his life,
So calm and temperate, kindly, grave, contained,
It cannot be that all this peace is rife,
And he alone in wintry silence chained;
Who ne'er perforce a single spirit pained,
Whose quaint grave wisdom gladdened in his look,
Should now be blind and dumb like wintry, prisoned
brook!

Peace! peace! my spirit! let not misery rave,
That he who left us holds untimely tryst
With shrouded death in June's untimely grave;
Though Love her bright wings darkens into mist,
With hope's eternal radiance death is kissed:—
Peace! peace! he lives yet in our highest dreams,
In every leafy, upward life, in every bud that gleams!

VI.

He sleeps alone by Fundy's thundering shore,
He sleeps, though heedless, unforgotten he,
Who loved earth's mystery ever more and more,
And yearned to pierce her veiled infinity;
He sleeps to-day unshackled, franchised, free,
To wander where she wills him, she who gave
And took to her again by sedge and sounding wave.

He sleeps, and dreaming, chance in dreams he may;—
If nature builds anew or holds unchanged
That fragile mystery clothed erstwhile in clay,
The human mind; whose wondrous vision ranged
The universe of life and thought unchanged;—
Soar to some morn, beyond these veiled skies,
And dusks of our poor night, and all its vague surmise.

I grieve, but not alone, the whole earth grieves
For him and all hushed souls who fare alone,
Reaped and bound as autumn-garnered sheaves,
Unto that harvest of the dim unknown:—
I grieve, but not in vain, as clouds are blown,
By sun and wind aside till heaven looks through;—
So some far shining hope illumines grief's dim dew.

From here by lone Ottawa's* dreaming bank,
To where he sleeps by his loved Fundy's tide,
Unheeding, where the seabirds, rank on rank,
Circle forever where the sea-winds ride:—
A thread of memory doth forever bide
Of those who knew and loved him in his prime,
Till memory fades and fails in some dim after-time;—

Then men may question, gazing on his tomb,
Who was this spirit of an earlier day?
And chance, still lingering in the aftergloom,
This sombre verse revivify his clay:
And teach men of his worthiness to stay
In memory and honor as of one
Who passed, untimely, ere his weird was spun.

This lover of earth's grave wisdom; in the man
He prized it dearer than in lore of page;
And dwelt in spirit with that rarer clan,
The seer, the bard, the prophet and the sage,
Who dream the purer dreams of each new age,
And build anew hope's citadels of time,
In granite of grim thought, or mists of airy rhyme.

Still dreams Ottawa,* 'twixt his country ways,
The roar of cities and the haste of men;—
And far-off Fundy thunders through his haze

* Pronounced Ot-taw-wa—with accent on second syllable.

A grief more sad than woe of poet's pen,
And wakes the sea-wolf in his craggy den,
And lifts his mists and brims his tides afar,
To lave the shining wastes of haunted Tantramar!

I grieve, but sorrow lightens; Love, all-wise,
Hath ne'er made earth a charnel-house for tears:—
Even as I dream, the morning drapes his skies
In glories far by golden woods and meres,
And builds a wondrous bastion round my fears;
While loosen the winds, their shining wings unfurled,
And God's great purpose compasses the world.

Sebastian Cabot

I DREAM his name, and there doth come to me
A vision of league-long breakers landward hurled;
Of olden ships far-beating out to sea;
Of splendid shining wastes of heaving green
Far-stretching round the world;
Of many voices heard from many lands,
Torrid and arctic, orient and the Line;
Of heaving of vast anchors, vanishing strands,
And over all the wonder and thunder and wash
Of the loud, world-conquering brine.
Of sky-rimmed waste, or fog-enshrouded reef,
Where some mad siren ever sings the grief
Of all the mighty wrecks in that weird span
Since ocean and time began.

II.

Venice and England cradled,
Could this seaman be
Other than ocean's child,
With heart less restless than that vast and wild
Great heart of the thrilling sea?
Wakened to her long thunders,
Cradled in her soft voice,
Could other voice of all earth's voices sweet
Make his stern heart rejoice?
Yea, this was better than all, greater than all
to him,
Truer than youth's mad whim,
The only love of his youth, the only lore of his
age,
To gaze on her vast tumultuous scroll,
To pore on her wrinkled page:—
For he was very soul of her soul,
And she meet mother for him.

III.

Over the hazy distance,
Beyond the sunset's rim,
Forever and forever
Those voices called to him,
Westward! westward! westward!
The sea sang in his head,
At morn in the busy harbor,
At nightfall on his bed—
Westward! westward! westward!
Over the line of breakers,
Out of the distance dim,
Forever the foam-white fingers
Beckoning, beckoning him.

IV.

This was no common spirit,
This sailor of old Bristowe;
Not one of the mart-made helots
Such as the world doth know;
But a bronzed and rugged veteran,
Adrift in the vanguard's flow;
A son of the world's great highway
Where the mighty storm-winds blow.

V.

All honor to this grand old Pilot,
Whose flag is struck, whose sails are furled,
Whose ship is beached, whose voyage ended;
Who sleeps somewhere in sod unknown,
Without a slab, without a stone.
In that great Island, sea-impearled.
Yea, reverence with honor blended,
For this old seaman of the past,
Who braved the leagues of ocean hurled,
Who out of danger knowledge rended,
And built the bastions, sure and fast,
Of that great bridgeway grand and vast
Of golden commerce round the world.
All honor! yea, a day shall come,
If glory lives in human rhyme,
When our poor faltering lips are dumb;
A greater and more splendid time,
When larger men of mightier aim
Shall do meet honor to his name.
Yea, honor! only greatness keeps
Its sanctuary where this seaman sleeps;
This old Venetian, Briton-born,
Who held of fear a hero's scorn,

Who nailed his colors to the mast,
Who sought in reverence for the true,
And found it in the rifting blue
Of those broad furrows of the vast.
Who knew no honors, held no state,
But in his ruggedness was great.
Who, like some sea-shell, in him felt
The universe of ocean dwelt,
Whose whole true being nature cast
Like his own ocean-spaces, vast!

VI.

Yea, he is dead, this mighty seaman!
Four long centuries ago.
Beating westward, ever westward,
Beating out from old Bristowe,
Saw he far in visions lifted,
Down the golden sunset's glow,
Through the bars of twilight rifted,
All the glories that we know.
Beating westward, ever westward,
Over heaving leagues of brine,
Buffeted by arctic scurries,
Languid trade-winds from the Line;
With a courage heaven-gifted,
And a fortitude divine.
Yea, he is dead; but who shall say
That all the splendid deeds he wrought,
That all the lofty truths he taught
(If truth be knowledge nobly sought),
Are dead and vanished quite away.
Nay, nay, he lives; and such as he,
In every lofty human dream,
In every true sublimity

That splendors earth and makes it teem
With inward might and majesty;
This grand old Pilot of Bristowe,
Incarnate, comes to earth again,
As when, four hundred years ago,
He swept in storm and shine and snow,
Athwart the thunders of the main.

VII.

Greater far than shaft or storied fane,
Than bronze and marble blent,
Greater than all the honors he could gain
From a nation's high intent,
He sleeps alone, in his great isle, unknown,
With the chalk-cliffs all around him for his
 mighty graveyard stone,
And the league-long, sounding roar
Of old ocean, for evermore
Beating, beating, about his rest,
For fane and monument.

Bereavement of the Fields

(In Memory of Archibald Lampman, who died February 10th, 1899)

SOFT fall the February snows, and soft
Falls on my heart the snow of wintry pain;
For never more, by wood or field or croft,
Will he we knew walk with his loved again;
No more, with eyes adream and soul aloft,
In those high moods where love and beauty reign,
Greet his familiar fields, his skies without a stain.

Soft fall the February snows, and deep,
Like downy pinions from the moulting breast
Of all the mothering sky, round his hushed sleep,
Flutter a million loves upon his rest,
Where once his well-loved flowers were fain to peep,
With adder-tongue and waxen petals prest,
In young spring evenings reddening down the west.

Soft fall the February snows, and hushed
Seems life's loud action, all its strife removed.
Afar, remote, where grief itself seems crushed,
And even hope and sorrow are reproved ;
For he whose cheek erstwhile with hope was flushed,
And by the gentle haunts of being moved,
Hath gone the way of all he dreamed and loved.

Soft fall the February snows, and lost,
This tender spirit gone with scarce a tear,
Ere, loosened from the dungeons of the frost.
Wakens with yearnings new the enfranchised year.
Late winter-wizened, gloomed, and tempest-tost ;
And Hesper's gentle, delicate veils appear,
When dream anew the days of hope and fear.

And Mother Nature, she whose heart is fain,
Yea, she who grieves not, neither faints nor fails,
Building the seasons, she will bring again
March with rudening madness of wild gales,
April and her wraiths of tender rain,
And all he loved,—this soul whom memory veils,
Beyond the burden of our strife and pain.

Not his to wake the strident note of song,
Nor pierce the deep recesses of the heart,
Those tragic wells, remote, of night and wrong ;

But rather, with those gentler souls apart,
He dreamed like his own summer days along,
Filled with the beauty born of his own heart,
Sufficient in the sweetness of his song.

Outside this prison-house of all our tears,
Enfranchised from our sorrow and our wrong,
Beyond the failure of our days and years,
Beyond the burden of our saddest song,
He moves with those whose music filled his ears,
And claimed his gentle spirit from the throng,—
Wordsworth, Arnold, Keats, high masters of his song.

Like some rare Pan of those old Grecian days,
Here in our hours of deeper stress reborn,
Unfortunate thrown upon life's evil ways,
His inward ear heard ever that satyr horn
From Nature's lips reverberate night and morn,
And fled from men and all their troubled maze,
Standing apart, with sad, incurious gaze.

And now, untimely cut, like some sweet flower
Plucked in the early summer of its prime,
Before it reached the fullness of its dower,
He withers in the morning of our time;
Leaving behind him, like a summer shower,
A fragrance of earth's beauty, and the chime
Of gentle and imperishable rhyme.

Songs in our ears of winds and flowers and buds
And gentle loves and tender memories
Of Nature's sweetest aspects, her pure moods,
Wrought from the inward truth of intimate eyes
And delicate ears of him who harks and broods,
And, nightly pondering, daily grows more wise,
And dreams and sees in mighty solitudes.

Soft fall the February snows, and soft
He sleeps in peace upon the breast of her
He loved the truest; where, by wood and croft,
The wintry silence folds in fleecy blur
About his silence, while in glooms aloft
The mighty forest fathers, without stir,
Guard well the rest of him, their rare sweet
 worshipper.

Nicholas Flood Davin

NATURE the mother hath her seas,
 Her lakes, her vales, her mountain
 rifts,
And to her various sons she gives
 Her various gifts.

To one the power of mighty mind,
 To sway, to forge a people's chain,
And to another but to bear
 A life-long pain.

To one rare soul her magic lore
 Of will, keen insight, prophecy;
To do, to dare, and change all things
 Beneath the sky.

Unto another to console,
 To raise and succor, aid and heal
Those wounded ones who blindly drive
 Fate's grinding wheel.

Not singly gifted was this man,
No simple furrow his to plow;
But with a burden of gifts the Mother
kind
Did him endow.

The piercing wit, the splendid form,
The poet lip, the flashing eye,
And all that magic power of soul
That will not die.

Not his to rule with subtle skill,
To plot, to plan with fertile brain;
But with rare charm of mind and voice
To hold and chain.

Here where he sleeps we rear this stone,
Memorial of his spirit's force;
This valiant knight whom death alone
Could dare unhorse.

Alone he moved amid our clan,
A genial alien in our waste,
The courtly relie of an age
Of finer taste;

When kindly satire forged her darts,
And wit and learning leaned to rhyme;
And polished sentences were more in
vogue,
And less a crime.

Courteous and manly, child of that
Rare charm old Erin grants her sons;
With all that humorous touch with
which she dowers
Her rarer ones.

Not his to raise prophetic voice,
To sear the soul with flaming brand :
He stood for culture, genial, kind,
In our new land :

Where Force, oft naked, often clothed
In ruder garments than is meet,
Doth in grave senate halls parade,
As in the street.

Yea, he is gone, departed hence,
When shall our halls another find :
His kindly satire, scintillating wit,
His classic mind.

And o'er his grave Canadian love
Canadian grief a garland throws :
And our young muse a chaplet binds
About his brows.

Leaving his faults, his virtues rare,
His failure, hopes, to gentle heaven ;
Forgiving his weakness, as we do also
pray
To be forgiven.

Henry A. Harper

(Drowned in the Ottawa River while trying to save Miss Blair)

WE crown the splendors of immortal peace,
And laud the heroes of ensanguined war,
Rearing in granite memory of men
Who build the future, recreate the past,
Or animate the present dull world's pulse
With loftier riches of the human mind.

But his was greatness not of common mould,
And yet so human in its simple worth,
That any spirit plodding its slow round
Of social commonplace and daily moil,
Might blunder on such greatness, did he hold
In him the kernel sap from which it sprung.

Men in rare hours great actions may perform,
Heroic, lofty, whereof earth will ring,
A world onlooking, and the spirit strung
To high achievement, at the cannon's mouth,
Or where fierce ranks of maddened men go down.

But this was godlier. In the common round
Of life's slow action, stumbling on the brink
Of sudden opportunity, he chose
The only noble, godlike, splendid way,
And made his exit, as earth's great have gone.
By that vast doorway looking out on death.

No poet this of winged, immortal pen;
No hero of an hundred victories;
Nor iron moulder of unwieldy states,
Grave counsellor of parliaments, gold-tongued,
Standing in shadow of a centuried fame,
Drinking the splendid plaudits of a world.

But simple, unrecorded in his days,
Unostentatious, like the average man
Of average duty, walked the common earth,
And when fate flung her challenge in his face,
Took all his spirit in his blinded eyes,
And showed in action why God made the world.

He passes as all pass, both small and great,
Oblivion-clouded, to the common goal;—
And all unmindful moves the dull world round,

With baser dreams of this material day,
And all that makes man petty, the slow pace
Of small accomplishment that mocks the soul.

But he hath taught us by this splendid deed,
That under all the brutish mask of life
And dulled intention of ignoble ends,
Man's soul is not all sordid; that behind
This tragedy of ills and hates that seem,
There lurks a godlike impulse in the world,
And men are greater than they idly dream.

The Dead Leader

(Written on the day of Sir John A. Macdonald's Funeral,
June 10th, 1891)

LET the sad drums mutter low,
And the serried ranks move slow,
And the thousand hearts beat hushed along the street;
For a mighty heart is still,
And a great, unconquered will
Hath passed to meet the conqueror all must meet.

Outworn without assoil
From a great life's lengthened toil,
Laurelled with a half a century's fame;
From the care and adulation
To the heart-throb of the nation
He hath passed to be a memory and a name.

With banners draped and furled,
'Mid the sorrow of a world,
We lay him down with fitting pomp and state;
With slumber in his breast,
To his long, eternal rest
We lay him down, this man who made us great.

Him of the wider vision,
Who had one hope, elysian,
To mould a mighty empire toward the west:
Who through the hostile years,
'Mid the wrangling words, like spears,
Still bore this titan vision in his breast.

God gave this highest honor
To the nation, that upon her
He was spared to lay the magic of his hand;
Then to live to see the greatness
Of his noble work's completeness,
Then to pass to rest beloved by his land.

We stand at death's dim gates
Where his mighty soul awaits
Somewhere the long, long silence of the years.
And the marble of his lips
Doth all our woe eclipse,
Death's awful peace rolls back upon our tears.

Greater than all sorrow
That our hearts can borrow,
Loftier than our fleeting, human praise;
He hath calmness, great and grim,
That death hath granted him,
The wisest and the mightiest of our days.

Let the sad drums mutter low,
And the serried ranks move slow,
And the thousand hearts beat hushed along the street:
For a mighty heart is still,
And a great, unconquered will
Hath passed to meet the conqueror all must meet.

Alexander Lumsden

A Scottish-Canadian

BESIDE the Rideau, 'neath its elms,
Still stands the home he loved so well;
But silence eternal overwhelms
The kindly master 'neath its spell.

Beneath its roof-tree hushed he lies
In death's cold truce of mortal pain,
While outside under August skies
His loved flowers glisten in the rain,

Unconscious in their lack of grief
Of those who come or those who go,
Innocent in their beauty brief,
Of human heart-break, human woe.

A man he was of simple moods,
Of strong keen action, kindly thought,
A friend of life's beatitudes,
Beneath the rough mail grimly wrought.

Time's busy battlers of the street,
In strife for earth's material things,
Know not the souls they daily meet.
Disguised in trade's grim armored rings.

'Tis not the outward presence, bland,
Whose honied accents plaudits win,
The favored idol of a land,
That holds the noblest heart within.

'Twas not the high or lowly birth,
The worldly culture, made this man,—
But somewhat in him, more than earth,
That blessed him ere his life began.

Some kind, intuitive knowledge sent,
Some wisdom of the heart and brain;
Some essence in his nature blent,
As throughout heaven dissolves the rain;

That 'mid the grime of worldly strife,
Of toil's rude struggle, hard and grim,
Still near to nature all his life
There walked the unsullied heart of him.

A spirit joying in tender moods
Of bud and blossom, sun and rain;
Who read the wisdom of wide woods,
A poet with all the poet's pain.

The bough into the blast is bent,
The shaft from out the bow is sped;
The fire that flamed the wick is spent,
The wind that whirled the dust is dead.

Fair Stanley Avenue, once so full
Of life's achievement, power and will!
Now only silence beautiful!
The very vagrant hours are still.

NEW EDINBURGH, August 6, 1904.

Poems of the Affections

Beyond the Hills of Dream

OVER the mountains of sleep, my Love,
Over the hills of dream,
Beyond the walls of care and fate,
Where the loves and memories teem ;
We come to a world of fancy free,
Where hearts forget to weep ;—
Over the mountains of dream, my Love,
Over the hills of sleep.

Over the hills of care, my Love,
Over the mountains of dread,
We come to a valley, glad and vast,
Where we meet the long-lost dead :
And there the gods in splendor dwell,
In a land where all is fair,
Over the mountains of dread, my Love,
Over the hills of care.

Over the mountains of dream, my Love,
Over the hills of sleep ;—
Could we but come to that heart's desire,
Where the harvests of fancy reap,
Then we would know the old joys and hopes,
The longings of youth's bright gleam,
Over the mountains of sleep, my Love,
Over the hills of dream.

Yea, there the sweet old years have rest,
And there my heart would be,
Amid the glad ones loved of yore,
At the sign of the Fancy Free :

And there the old lips would repeat
Earth's memories o'er and o'er,
Over the mountains of might-have-been,
Over the hills of yore.

Unto that valley of dreams, my Love,
If we could only go,
Beyond the mountains of heart's despair,
The hills of winter and snow,
Then we would come to those happy isles,
Those shores of blossom and wing,
Over the mountains of waiting, my Love,
Over the hills of spring.

And there where the woods are scarlet and gold,
And the apples are red on the tree,
The heart of autumn is never old
In that country where we would be.
And how would we come to that land, my Love?
Follow the midnight stars,
That swim and gleam in a milk-white stream,
Over the night's white bars.

Or follow the trail of the sunset red
That beacons the dying deeps
Of day's wild borders down the edge
Of silence, where evening sleeps;
Or take the road that the morning wakes,
When he whitens his first rosebeam,
Over the mountains of glory, my Love,
Over the hills of dream.

Sometime, sometime, we will go, my Love,
When winter loosens to spring,
And all the spirits of Joy are ajog,
After the wild-bird's wing,—

When winter and sorrow have opened their doors
To set love's prisoners free,
Over the mountains of woe, my Love,
Over the hills of dree.

And when we reach there we will know
The faces we knew of yore,
The lips that kissed, the hands that clasped,
When memory loosens her store;
And we will drink to the long dead years,
In that inn of the golden gleam,
Over the mountains of sleep, my Love,
Over the hills of dream.

And all the joys we missed, my Love,
And all the hopes we knew,
The dreams of life we dreamed in vain,
When youth's red blossoms blew;
And all the hearts that throbbed for us,
In the past so sunny and fair,
We will meet and greet in that golden land,
Over the hills of care.

Over the mountains of sleep, my Love,
Over the hills of dream,
Beyond the walls of care and fate,
Where the loves and memories teem,
We come to a land of fancy free,
Where hearts forget to weep,
Over the mountains of dream, my Love,
Over the hills of sleep.

Love

Love came at dawn when all the world was fair,
When crimson glories, bloom, and song were rife;
Love came at dawn when hope's wings fanned the air.
And murmured, "I am life."

Love came at even when the day was done,
When heart and brain were tired, and slumber
pressed;
Love came at eve, shut out the sinking sun,
And whispered, "I am rest."

Afterglow

AFTER the clangor of battle
There comes a moment of rest,
And the simple hopes and the simple joys
And the simple thoughts are best.

After the victor's pæan,
After the thunder of gun,
There comes a lull that must come to all
Before the set of the sun.

Then what is the happiest memory?
Is it the foe's defeat?
Is it the splendid praise of a world
That thunders by at your feet?

Nay, nay, to the life-worn spirit
The happiest thoughts are those
That carry us back to the simple joys
And the sweetness of life's repose.

A simple love and a simple trust
And a simple duty done,
Are truer torches to light to death
Than a whole world's victories won.

Out of Pompeii

SHE lay, face downward, on her bended arm,
In this her new, sweet dream of human bliss,
Her heart within her fearful, fluttering, warm.
Her lips yet pained with love's first timorous kiss.
She did not note the darkening afternoon,
She did not mark the lowering of the sky
O'er that great city. Earth had given its boon
Unto her lips, love touched her and passed by.

In one dread moment all the sky grew dark,
The hideous rain, the panic, the red rout,
Where love lost love, and all the world might mark
The city overwhelmed, blotted out
Without one cry, so quick oblivion came,
And life passed to the black where all forget;
But she—we know not of her house or name—
In love's sweet musings doth lie dreaming yet.

The dread hell passed, the ruined world grew still,
And the great city passed to nothingness:
The ages went and mankind worked its will.
Then men stood still amid the centuries' press,

And in the ash-hid ruins opened bare,
As she lay down in her shamed loveliness,
Sculptured and frozen, late they found her there,
Image of love 'mid all that hideousness.

Her head, face downward, on her bended arm,
Her single robe that showed her shapely form,
Her wondrous fate love keeps divinely warm
Over the centuries, past the slaying storm;
The heart can read in writings time hath left,
That linger still through death's oblivion;
And in this waste of life and light bereft,
She brings again a beauty that had gone.

And if there be a day when all shall wake,
As dreams the hoping, doubting human heart,
The dim forgetfulness of death will break
For her as one who sleeps with lips apart;
And did God call her suddenly, I know
She'd wake as morning wakened by the thrush,
Feel that red kiss across the centuries glow,
And make all heaven rosier by her blush.

Harvest Slumber Song

SLEEP, little baby, sleep, sleep, sleep,
Red is the moon in the night's still deep,
White are the stars with their silver wings
Folded in dreamings of beautiful things,
And over their cradle the night wind sings,
Sleep, little baby, sleep, sleep, sleep.

Soft in the lap of the mother night
The wee baby stars, all glowing and bright,

Flutter their silver wings and crow
To the watchful winds that kiss as they blow
Round the air-cradle that swings so low
Down in the lap of the mother night.

Sleep, little baby, sleep, sleep, sleep,
Red is the moon in the night's still deep,
And the wee baby stars are all folded and kissed
In a luminous cradle of silver mist;
And if ever they waken the winds cry, Whist,
Sleep, little baby, sleep, sleep, sleep.

The Mother

This poem was suggested by the following passage in Tyler's Animism: "The pathetic German superstition that the dead mother's coming back in the night to suckle the baby she has left on earth may be known by the hollow pressed down in the bed where she lay."

I.

It was April, blossoming spring,
They buried me, when the birds did sing;

Earth, in clammy wedging earth,
They banked my bed with a black, damp girth.

Under the damp and under the mould,
I kenned my breasts were clammy and cold.

Out from the red beams, slanting and bright,
I kenned my cheeks were sunken and white.

I was a dream, and the world was a dream,
And yet I kenned all things that seem.

I was a dream, and the world was a dream,
But you cannot bury a red sunbeam.

For though in the under-grave's doom-night
I lay all silent and stark and white,

Yet over my head I seemed to know
The murmurous moods of wind and snow,

The snows that wasted, the winds that blew,
The rays that slanted, the clouds that drew

The water-ghosts up from lakes below,
And the little flower-souls in earth that grow.

Under earth, in the grave's stark night,
I felt the stars and the moon's pale light.

I felt the winds of ocean and land
That whispered the blossoms soft and bland.

Though they had buried me dark and low,
My soul with the season's seemed to grow.

II.

From throes of pain they buried me low,
For death had finished a mother's woe.

But under the sod, in the grave's dread doom,
I dreamed of my baby in glimmer and gloom.

I dreamed of my babe, and I kened that his rest
Was broken in wailings on my dead breast.

I dreamed that a rose-leaf hand did cling:
Oh, you cannot bury a mother in spring!

When the winds are soft and the blossoms are red
She could not sleep in her cold earth-bed.

I dreamed of my babe for a day and a night,
And then I rose in my graveclothes white.

I rose like a flower from my damp earth-bed
To the world of sorrowing overhead.

Men would have called me a thing of harm,
But dreams of my babe made me rosy and warm.

I felt my breasts swell under my shroud;
No star shone white, no winds were loud;

But I stole me past the graveyard wall,
For the voice of my baby seemed to call;

And I kenned me a voice, though my lips were
dumb:
Hush, baby, hush! for mother is come.

I passed the streets to my husband's home;
The chamber stairs in a dream I clomb;

I heard the sound of each sleeper's breath,
Light waves that break on the shores of death.

I listened a space at my chamber door,
Then stole like a moon-ray over its floor.

My babe was asleep on a stranger arm,
"O baby, my baby, the grave is so warm,

"Though dark and so deep, for mother is there!
O come with me from the pain and care!

“O come with me from the anguish of earth,
Where the bed is banked with a blossoming girth,

“Where the pillow is soft and the rest is long,
And mother will croon you a slumber-song—

“A slumber-song that will charm your eyes
To a sleep that never in earth-song lies!

“The loves of earth your being can spare,
But never the grave, for mother is there.”

I nestled him soft to my throbbing breast,
And stole me back to my long, long rest.

And here I lie with him under the stars,
Dead to earth, its peace and its wars;

Dead to its hates, its hopes, and its harms,
So long as he cradles up soft in my arms.

And heaven may open its shimmering doors,
And saints make music on pearly floors,

And hell may yawn to its infinite sea,
But they never can take my baby from me.

For so much a part of my soul he hath grown
That God doth know of it high on His throne.

And here I lie with him under the flowers
That sun-winds rock through the billowy hours,

With the night-airs that steal from the murmur-
ing sea,
Bringing sweet peace to my baby and me.

On a Summer Shore

LONG years have gone, and yet it seems
But scarce an hour ago,
I lay upon a moss-grown rock,
And watched the ebb and flow
Of waters, where cool shades above
Glassed in cool depths below.

You stood beside me sweet and fair,
A basket on your arm,
Red-heaped with luscious fruit we'd picked
Down at the old shore-farm;
You stood and in the shore-wood made
A picture glad and warm.

Like heaving pearl the blue bay rocked
Against its limestone wall,
Far off in reeling dreams of blue
The heavens seemed to fall
About the world, and there you stood,
Unconscious, queen of all.

From far-off fields the low of kine,
Soft bird-notes, airy streams,
That stole in here, far, broken notes
Of all the day's hushed dreams;
And you, one slender shaft of light,
In all the world's wide gleams.

We spoke no love, for I was shy,
And you were shyer then;
Mine was a boy's faint heart, and yours
Still outside of love's ken;
But such sweet moments are full rare
In barren years of men.

And often when the heart is worn
And life grows sorrow-wise,
I dream again a blue, north bay,
A gleam of summer skies;
And by my side a young girl stands
With heaven in her eyes.

You are a dream, a face, a wraith,
You drift across my pain,
I lock you in my sacred past
Where all love's ghosts remain;
But life hath nought for me so sweet
As you can bring again.

Belated

THE year drifts sadly back this way,
With autumn's grief and pain;
But with the red leaf and the gold
She ne'er will come again.

This world hath its weird beauteousness,
That youth in music stirs;
But time will ne'er bring back to earth
The beauty that was hers.

You could not call a red leaf God's
If she were not God's too;
A light fell on such eyes and lips
Man never more will woo.

When her smile went the day's went too,
Night, when she closed her eyes,

Lost half its glory. When she woke
Earth changed to paradise.

She looked so peaceful in her sleep
When they laid her to her rest,
I could not help but think upon
An infant at the breast.

She looked so like to one who'd wake
This side the break of dawn,
I grudged the very earth they heaped
Her snow-like breast upon.

I hear her low voice calling soft,
Her footstep at the doors;
I wake up in the dead of night,
And walk the wintry floors.

I see her croon her babe to sleep,
Athwart the moonlight now,
Her wealth of golden hair that fell
Across her gentle brow.

I often walk at death of day,
Amid the sunset firs,
And dream the world will no more know
The beauty that was hers.

I wonder in some far-off state,
If love can conquer death,
Will I know her and she know me,
As when she drew life's breath?

And will she stand at some flame-gate,
And wait and watch for me,

And fall upon my breast and weep
With joy my face to see?

And bring the little ones around
To climb to father's arms;
While her sweet face, the face of yore,
To mother-beauty warms?

And we go, laughing, weeping, through
Some gate of crystal dome,
While love grows godlike more and more,
To greet the wanderer home.

Departure

OLD house now ruined, wrecked and grey,
Home once enshrined of love's delight
And all glad promise of the May,
Now hushed in shades of wintry night,—

Once garment of a thousand loves,
Now but a shroud of glooming stone,—
While sad October moans and roves,
Old house, old house, we are alone!

We are alone; yea, you and I,
Who dreamed old summers in their prime;
Now sad and late, to see them die
Along this ruined verge of time.

Old rooms now empty, once so bright,—
Staircases climbed of gladdening feet,
Dark windows erstwhile filled with light
Where now but rains of autumn beat:—

Where now but lorn months call and call,
And sea and gust and night complain,—
With ghost-boughs shadowing on the wall,
Or dead vines knocking at the pane.

Old place, whose ceilings, walls and floors
Still redolent of love and May,
Once more, once more I leave your doors,
Into the night I take my way.

Huge yawning hearths, once flaming bright
On many a well-loved face and form
Long gathered out unto the night
To meet the vastness and the storm,—

Into the night; where I, too, go,
Beyond your sheltering walls and doors;
Where death's October drives his woe
Over a thousand midnight moors,

Beyond your sheltering, where I beat
To sleep with stars of dark o'ergleamed,
Or breast the night of moan and sleet
To meet that morn a world hath dreamed.

Hath dreamed? Hope-hungering heart hath read,
And caroled morning-lifted lark!
Yea, back of all this muffled dread
Perchance some splendor rifts the dark.

Yea, though no magic reach its gleams,
Nor heart of doubting prove it true,
Old house, beloved, of my dead dreams,
While I go forth from love and you.

Her Look

TIME may set his fingers there,
Fix the smiles that curve about
Her winsome mouth, and touch her hair,
Put the curves of youth to rout;
But the "something" God put there,
That which drew me to her first,
Not the imps of pain and care,
Not all sorrow's fiends accurst,
Can kill the look that God put there.

Something beautiful and rare,
Nothing common can destroy;
Not all the leaden load of care,
Not all the dross of earth's alloy;
Better than all fame or gold,
True as only God's own truth,
It is something all hearts hold
Who have loved once in their youth.

That sweet look her face doth hold
Thus will ever be to me;
Joy may all her pinions fold,
Care may come and misery;
Through the days of murk and shine,
Though the roads be foul or fair,
I will see through love's glad eyne
That sweet look that God put there.

Dramatic, Classic and Imaginative Verse

The Last Scene from "Mordred"

Another part of the field. Enter ARTHUR surrounded by knights.

Arthur. Now where is he, that monster, foul;
deformed

In shape and spirit, Nature calls my son?

Enter MORDRED.

Mordred. Here!

Arthur. Ah, Blot on all this sunlight, Creature dire,
Spawn of mine incest. There standest thou my sin,
Incarnate now before me, mine old doom;
Thou that wast stronger in thine influences
To work dread evil in this hideous world
Than all the glory all my good might win.

Mordred. Father!

Arthur. Yea, well say Father! Parent I this ill
That hath enrent my kingdom all in twain.
In that dread night of my licentious youth,
When I in darkness thy foul shape begot,
I worked a web of blackness round my fate
And thine, distorted phantom of my sin,
Not all the tolling of sweet abbey-bells,
And murmur of masses sung these thousand years,
Can sweep from this doomed kingdom. Father! yea,
There is no truce betwixt us. Thou art Death
To all that I hold dearest on this earth.
Thou stood'st betwixt me and my gladder fate,
The one black spot on all my glory's sun.
In thee once more mine evil blackens in,
Reddens mine eyesight. Have at thee, foul Curse!

Mordred. Father!

Arthur. Have at you!

(*They fight. Arthur wounds Mordred. He falls.
A Knight stabs Arthur from behind.*)

Arthur. Ho! all the sunlight blackens! Mordred! Oh!
My glory darkens! Curtain not yon sun! (*Dies.*)

Mordred. Yea, this is all and I were made for this,
To scatter death and desolation round

On this fair kingdom, ruin this sweet land,

And level all the pride of Arthur's glory,

As men might level some great castle walls

And sow with salt the fields of his desire,

And make him mock before the eyes of men.

Turn all his great joy into bitterness.

Yea, I his blood, and I were made for this.

Oh, ancient, cruel Laws of human life,

Oh, deep, mysterious, unfathomable Source

Of man's poor being, we are ringed about

With such hard rinds of hellish circumstance,

That we can never walk or breathe or hope,

Or eye the sun, or ponder on the green

Of tented plain, or glorious blue of heaven,

Or know love's joy, or knotted thews of strength,

But imps of evil thoughts creep in between,

Like lizards in the chinks of some fair wall,

And mar life's splendor and its fairness all.

'Tis some damned birth-doom blended in the blood

That prophesies our end in our poor acts.

Oh! we are but blind children of the dark,

Wending a way we neither make nor ken.

Yea, Arthur, I had loved thee sweet and well,

And made mine arm a bulwark to thy realm,

Had I been but as fair as Lancelot.

What evil germ, false quickening of the blood,

Did breed me foul, distorted as I am,

That I should mar this earth and thy great realm

With my wry, knotted sorrows? Lancelot's love

Was manly, kind, and generous as became
 A soul encased in such propitious frame.
 The kindly trees well turn them to the sun,
 And glory in their splendor with the morn.
 'Tis natural that noble souls should dwell
 'Twixt noble features, but the maimèd soul
 Should ever be found in the distorted shape.
 But I had loved as never man hath loved
 Did nature only plant me sweet at first.
 (*To his Knights.*) And now I die, and blessed be my
 death,

More blessed far that I had never breathed.
 Murder and Treason were my midwives dire,
 Rapine and Carnage, priests that shrive me now.

Enter VIVIEN, disguised as a Squire.

Vivien. Mordred! thou diest!

Mordred. Who art thou?

Vivien. I am Vivien.

Mordred. Hence, hence, Viper, incarnate Fiend!

Not natural woman, but Ambition framed,
 And all lust's envy. Thou wert unto me
 A blacker blackness. Did an angel come,
 And whisper sweeter counsel in mine ears,
 And trumpet hopes that all were not in vain;
 And thou wouldst wool mine ears with malice dire.
 And play upon the black chords of my heart.
 Hence, Devil! Mar not these my closing hours.

Vivien. O, Woe! Woe! (*Steals out.*)

Mordred. (*To the Knights.*) Now bear me slowly to
 great Arthur's side

And let me place my hands upon his breast,
 For he was mine own father! Alas! Alas!
 So hideous is this nature we endure!

(*The Soldiers place him by Arthur.*)

How calm he sleeps, Allenethon, as those should
 Who die in glorious battle. Dost thou know,

O mighty Father, that thine ill-got son,
 Ill-got of nature and mysterious night,
 To mar thy splendor and enwreck this world,
 Now crawls to thy dead body near his death,
 As would some wounded dog of faithful days,
 To lick his master's hand? Blame not, O King,
 If thou somewhere may know what I here feel,
 Thy poor, misshapen Mordred. Blame him not
 The turbulent, treacherous currents of his blood
 Which were a part of thine, nor let one thought
 Of his past evil mar thy mighty rest;
 He would have loved thee; but remember that.
 Now past is all this splendor, new worlds come;
 But nevermore will Britain know such grace,
 Such lofty glory and such splendid days.
 Back of the clang of battle, back of all
 The mists of life, the clamor and the fall
 Of ruined kingdoms built on human days;
 Arthur! Merlin! Mighty dead, I come!

(Springs to his feet.)

Ho! Horse! To Horse! My sword! A trumpet
 calls!

A Mordred!

(Dies.)

Pan the Fallen

HE wandered into the market
 With pipes and goatish hoof;
 He wandered in a grotesque shape,
 And no one stood aloof.
 For the children crowded round him,
 The wives and greybeards, too,
 To crack their jokes and have their mirth,
 And see what Pan would do.

The Pan he was they knew him,
Part man, but mostly beast,
Who drank, and lied, and snatched what bones
Men threw him from their feast;
Who seemed in sin so merry,
So careless in his woe,
That men despised, scarce pitied him,
And still would have it so.

He swelled his pipes and thrilled them,
And drew the silent tear;
He made the gravest clack with mirth
By his sardonic leer.
He blew his pipes full sweetly
At their amused demands,
And caught the scornful, earth-flung pence
That fell from careless hands.

He saw the mob's derision,
And took it kindly, too,
And when an epithet was flung,
A coarser back he threw;
But under all the masking
Of a brute, unseemly part,
I looked, and saw a wounded soul,
And a godlike, breaking heart.

And back of the elfin music,
The burlesque, clownish play,
I knew a wail that the weird pipes made,
A look that was far away,—
A gaze into some far heaven
Whence a soul had fallen down;
But the mob only saw the grotesque beast
And the antics of the clown.

For scant-flung pence he paid them
With mirth and elfin play,
Till, tired for a time of his antics qucer,
They passed and went their way;
Then there in the empty market
He ate his scanty crust,
And, tired face turned to heaven, down
He laid him in the dust.

And over his wild, strange features
A softer light there fell,
And on his worn, earth-driven heart
A peace ineffable.
And the moon rose over the market,
But Pan the beast was dead;
While Pan the god lay silent there,
With his strange, distorted head.

And the people, when they found him,
Stood still with awesome fear.
No more they saw the beast's rude hoof,
The furtive, clownish leer;
But the lightest spirit in that strong
Went silent from the place,
For they knew the look of a god released
That shone from his dead face.

Phaethon

I PHAETHON: dwelling in that golden house,
Which Hephaistos did build for my great sire,
Old Helios, king of glowing heaven and day;
Knowing this life but mortal in its span,
Hedged in by puling youth and palsied age,
Where poor men crawl like insects, knowing pain

And mighty sorrow to the gates of death;
Besought the god my father by his love
To grant me that which I did long for most
Of all things great in earth and heaven and sea,
The which he granting in his mighty love,—
Of all things splendid under the splendid sky
Built of old by toil of ancient gods,
To me the dearest; for one round golden day,
To stand in his great chariot built of fire,
And chase the rosy hours from dawn to dusk,
Guiding his fleeting steeds o'er heaven's floors.
He gave to me.—No god yet brake his word.
Speaking to me in sorrow: "O my son,
Know what my foolish pride hath made for thee.
That mortal life which is to men a span,
From childhood unto youth, and manhood's prime,
Reaching on out to happy olden age,
For thee must shrink into one woeful day.
For, O my son, impetuous in thy pride,
Who would be as the gods and ape their ways,
And sacrilegious leave thy mortal bounds,—
Know thou must die upon that baleful day,
That terrible day of days thou mountest up
To ride that chariot never mortal rode,
And drive those steeds that never man hath driven."
Then I—"My father, know me, thine own son,
Better to me to live one day a god,
Going out in some great flame of death,
Than live this weary life of common men,
Misunderstood, misunderstanding still,
Half wakeful, moving dimly in a dream,
Confused, phantasmic, men call history;
Chasing the circles of the perishing suns,
The summers and dim winters, hating all,
Heart-eaten for a longing ne'er attained,

Despising all things named of earth or heaven,
Or mortal birth that they should ever be ;
Knowing within this mystery of my being,
This curbed heredity, lies a latent dream
Of some old vanished, banished, lease of being,
When life was life and man's soul lived its hour,
Uncurbed, uncabined, like the mighty gods,
Vast, splendid, capable, and heraclean,
To drain the golden beaker of his days."
Thus I—"My father, I am over weary,
Chained in this summer-plot of circumstance,
Beaten by fearful custom, childish, chidden,
Hounded of cruel wolves of superstition,
And rounded by a petty wall of time,
Plodding the dreary years that wend their round,
Aping the sleeping, sensual life of beasts,
Fearful of all things, dreading mostly death,
Past pain and age and all their miseried end,
Where all must rot, who smile and weep and sleep,
And be a part of all this grim corruption.
Nay, better to me than the long-measured draught,
Trickling out through many anxious years,
Iron-eaten, haggard, to the place of death—
To drain my flagon of life in one glad draught,—
To live, to love, aspire, and dare all things ;
Be all I am and others ought to be,
Real man or demi-god, to blossom my rose,
To seale my heights, to live my vastest dream,
To climb, to be, and then, if chance my fate,
To greatly fall."

Then my great father, laden
With woe divine, "My son, take thou thy way ;
As thou hast chosen, thus 'twill be to thee ;"
And passing, darkened down his godlike face
And shadowed splendor thence for evermore.

"Twas night ambrosial down the orient meads,
 With stars like winking pearls, far-studding heaven,
 And dews all glorious on the bending stem,
 Odorous, passionate as the rose of sleep
 Half-budded on the throbbing heart of night;
 And in the east a glowing sapphire gloomed,
 When I awoke and lifted up mine eyes,
 And saw through rose and gold and vermeil dyes,
 And splendid mists of azure hung with pearl,
 Half-hid, half-seen, as life would apprehend,
 As in a sleep, the presence of dim death
 And fate and terrible gods, the car of day.

Like morn within the morning, glad, it hung,
 Light hid in light, swift blinding all who saw,
 Dazzled, its presence; motionless though vibrate,
 Where it did swing athwart the deep-welled night,
 The heart of morning in the folds of dark,
 Pulsating sleep, and conquering death with life;
 So glowed its glory, folded, cloud in cloud,
 Gold within azure, purple shut in gold,
 The bud of morning pulsing ere it break,
 And spill its splendors many vermeil-dyed,
 Reddening Ocean to his outmost rim.

Here charmèd dreams and drowsèd magic hung,
 And wingèd hopes and rosy joys afloat
 Filled all the air, and I was short aware
 That this was life, and this mine hour supreme,
 To seize and act and be one with the gods.
 So dreamed I reckless when to think, to act,
 And moved, elate, with quick life-flaming step
 Athwart the meadow's budding asphodels,
 Song on my lip, and life at heart and eye,
 Exultant, breathing flame of pride and power.

Joy rose and sang, a bird, across the fields,
Hope's rosy wings shot trembling to the blue,
And courage with dauntless steps before me went,
Brushing the veils of fierce cobwebby fires.
And there, before me, sprawled grim ancient Power,
A hideous Ethiop, huge in sodden sleep,
The golden reins clutched in his titan hands.
I snatched, leaped, shouted; morning rose in flame,
And ashweed paled to lily, lily blushed
To ruddy crocus, crocus flamed to rose,
And out of all, borne on the floors of light,
I floated, gloried, up the orient walls,
And all things woke, and sang of conquering day.

Higher, yet higher, out of fiery mists,
Filling those meadows of the dew-built dawn,
Gloried and glorying, power clutched in my hand,
Wreathed about in terrible spendors, I drave,
Glowing, the dawn's gold coursers, champing steam
Of snow and pearly foam from golden bridles,
Forged in blue eidolon forges of the night,
Beaten on steely anvils of the stars.
These, champing, reared their fetlocks; breathing
flame,
In red, dew-draining lances, thundered on,
'Whelming night, as golden stair by stair
They climbed the glimmering bridgeway of the day.

Far under, wreathed in mists, old ocean swayed;
And, cyclops-like, the bearded mountains hung.
Vast shining rivers with their brimming floors
And broad curved courses gleamed and glanced and
shone,
And loneliness and gloom and grey despair

With sombre hauntings fled to shuddering night,
 Hidden in caves and coral glooms of seas.
 Low down the east the morn's ambrosial meads
 Sank in soft splendors. Sphering out below,
 Gilded in morning, anchored the patient earth,
 Mountain and valley, ocean and wide plain,
 Opening to dawn's young footsteps where we wheeled,
 And blossomed wide the rosebud of the day.
 Glory was mine, but greater, sense of power,
 Nor marred by fear, as loftier we climbed,
 With glinting hoofs, that clanged the azure bridge
 That arched from dawning up to flaming noon.
 Dauntless my soul, and fiery-glad my heart,
 And "vastness," "vastness," sang through all my
 being,
 As gloved with adamant I guided on
 The day's red coursers up their flaming hill,
 To reach the mighty keystone of the day.

All things conspired to build my upward road:
 The fitful winds of morning, the soft clouds,
 That fleecy-like swept my cheek, the azure glint
 Of ocean swaying, restless, on his rim,
 Where slept the continents like a serpent curled
 In sleep, leviathan, huge, about the world.

Then sudden all my waking turned to dream,
 A madness wherein, hideous, all things hung.
 Thought fled confused, and awful apprehension
 Shadowed my spirit, power and reason fled;
 And, maddening, day's red coursers thundered on,
 Uncurbed, unguided by my palsied hand.
 Then with loud ruin, blundering from the bridge,
 Through space went swaying, now high up, now
 down,

Scattering conflagration and fierce death
O'er earth's shrunk verges where their scorchings
scarred.

Time fled in terror, forests shriveled up,
Ocean drew back in shudderings to his caves,
Huge mountains shook and rumbled to their base,
Great streams dried up, old cities smoked and fell,
And all life met confusion and despair,
And dread annihilation.

Then the gods,
Pitying wrecked nature, in their sudden vengeance,
Me, impious, hurled from out my dizzying height.
Time vanished, reason swooned, then left her throne,
And darkness wrapt me as I shuddering fell,
Oblivion-clouded, to the plunging seas.
Ocean received me, folding in his deeps,
Cooling and emerald. Here in coral dreams
I rest and cure me, never wholly waking,
Filled with one splendor, fumbling in a dream,
As waves do fumble all about a cave,
For one clear memory of that one high day.

I failed, was mortal; where I climbed I fell.
But all else little matters; life was mine,
I dreamed, I dared, I grappled with, I fell;
And here I live it over in my dreams.
All things may pass, decline, and come to naught,
Death 'whelm life as day engulfed in dark;
But I have greatly lived, have greatly dared,
And death will never wholly wrap me round
And black me in its terrors. I am made
One with the future, dwelling in the dreams
And memories dread of envious gods and men.

Sir Lancelot

HE rode, a king, amid the armored knights,
The glory of day tossing on helm and shield,
And all the glory of his youth and joy
In the strong, wine-like splendor of his face.
He rode among them, the one man of men,
Their lordliest, loveliest, he who might have been,
Because of very human breadth of love,
And his glad, winning sympathy for earth,
Greater than even Arthur under heaven.

Kindlier than the morning was his face,
Swift, like the lightning, was his eagle glance,
No bit of beauty earth had ever held,
Of child or flower or dream of woman's face,
Or noble, passing godliness of mood,
In man toward man, but garnered in his eye,
As in some mere that gathereth all earth's face,
And foldeth it in beauty to its breast.

He rode among them, Arthur's own right hand,
Arthur, whom he loved as John loved Christ,
And watched each day with joy that lofty brow
Lift up its lonely splendor, isolate,
Half godlike, o'er that serried host of spears;
And knew his love the kingliest, holiest thing,
"Twixt man and man upon this glowing earth.

So passed those days of splendor and of peace,
When all men loved his majesty and strength
And kindness of spirit, which the king,
Great Arthur, with his lofty coldness lacked.

'Twas Lancelot fought the mightiest in the lists,
And beat with thunders back the brazen shields,
And stormed the fastness of the farthest isles,
Slaying the grizzly warriors of the meres,
And winning all men's fealty and love,
And worship of fair women in the towers,
Who laid their distaffs down to watch him pass;
And made the hot blood mantle each fair cheek,
With sweet sense of his presence, till all men
Called Arthur half a god, and Lancelot
The greatest heart that beat in his great realm.

Then came that fatal day that brake his life,
When he, being sent of Arthur, all unknowing,
Saw Guinevere, like some fair flower of heaven,
As men may only see in dreams the gods
Do send to kill the common ways of earth,
And make all else but drear and dull and bleak;
Such magic she did work upon his soul,
Till Arthur, God, and all the Table Round,
Were but a nebulous mist before his eyes,
In which the splendor of her beauty shone.

Henceforth the years would rise and wane and die,
And glory come and glory pass away,
And battles pass as in a troubled dream,
And Arthur be a ghost, and his knights ghosts;—
The castles and the lists and the mad fights,
Sacking of cities, scourging of country-sides,
All dreams before his eyes;—all, save her love.

So girded she her magic round his heart,
And meshed him in a golden mesh of love,
And marred his sense of all earth's splendor there.

But in the after-days when brake the end,
And she had fled to Glastonbury's cells,

With all the world one clamor at her sin :
And Arthur like a storm-smit pine-tree stood,
Alone amid his kingdom's blackened ruins ;—
Then Lancelot knew his life an evil dream,
And thought him of the friendship of their youth.
And all the days that they had been together,
And "Arthur, Arthur," spake from all the meres.
And "Arthur, Arthur," moaned from days afar.
And Lancelot grieved him of his woeful sin :—
"And this the hand that smote mine Arthur down,
That brake his glory, ruined his great hope
Of one vast kingdom built on noble deeds,
And truth and peace for many days to be.
This hand that should have been his truest strength,
Next to that high honor which he held."
And all the torrents of his sorrow brake
For his own Arthur—Arthur standing lone,
Like some unruven pine that towers alone
Amid the awful ruins of a world.
And then a woeful longing smote him there,
To ride by murk and moon, by mere and waste,
To where the king made battle with his foes.
And look, unknown, upon his face, and die.

So thinking this he fled, and the queen's wraith,
A memory, in the moonlight fled with him.
But stronger with him fled his gladder youth
And all the memories of the splendid past,
Until his heart yearned for the days that were.
And that great, noble soul who fought alone.

Then coming by cock-crow and the glimmering dawn.
He reached the grey-walled castle of the land,
Where the king tarried ere he went to fight
The last dread battle of the Table Round.

And the grim sentinels who guarded there,
Thinking only of him as Arthur's friend,
And knowing not the Lancelot scandal named,
And judging by the sorrow of his face,
Deemed him some knight who came to aid the king,
And pointing past the waning beacon fires,
Said, "There he sleeps as one who hath no woes."

And Lancelot passing silent left them there,
And entering the old abbey, ('twas some ruin
Of piety and worship of past days,)
Saw in the flicker of a dying hearth,
Mingled with faint glimmering of the dawn,
The great king sleeping, where a mighty cross
Threw its dread shadow o'er his moving breast.

And Lancelot knew the same strong, godlike face
That he had worshipped in the days no more;
And all their olden gladness smote him now,
And he had wept but that his awful sin,
That made a wall of flame betwixt them there,
Had seared the very fountains of his soul.
Whereat he moaned, "O noble, saintly heart,
Couldst thou but know amidst thine innocent sleep,
Save for the awful sin that flames between,
That here doth stand the Lancelot of old days,
The one of all the world who loved thee most,
The joyous friend of all thy glorious youth;
O noble! godlike! Lancelot, who hath sinned
As none hath sinned against thee, now hath come
To gaze upon thy majesty and die.
O Arthur! thou great Arthur of my youth,
My sun, my joy, my glory!"

Here the king
Stirred in his sleep, and murmured, "Guinevere!"

And Lancelot, feeling that an age of ages,
Hoary with all anguish of old crime
And hideous bloodshed, were now builded up
Betwixt him and the king at that one name,
Clothed with the mad despairings of his shame,
Stole like some shrunken ghost-life from that place,
'To look no more upon great Arthur's face.

Then it did smite upon him he must die;
And in him the old ghost of honor woke .
That he must die in battle, and go out
Where no dread sorrow could gnaw at his heart,
But all forgetting and eternal sleep.

Whereat the madness of old battle woke,
For his dread sin now burned all softness out,
And the glad kindliness of the Table Round,
And left him, shorn of all the Christian knight,
The gentle lord who only smote to save,
Or shield the helpless from the brutal stroke;
And flamed his heart there with the lust to slay,
And slaying be slain as his grim sires went out.

Then some far trumpet startled all the morn,
Trembling westward from its dewy sleep.
And with the day new battle woke the meres,
And as a wood-wolf scents the prey afar,
The noise of coming battle smote his ears,
And woke in him the fierceness of his race,
And the old pagan, joyous lust of fight.
And crying, "Farewell, Arthur, mine old youth,
Farewell, Lancelot, mine old kinder self,
Lancelot, Arthur's brother, lie there low,
Slain with the glory wherewithal you fell,

While this new Lancelot, new-bred of old time,
Before the new hope of the loftier day,
Before the reign of mercy and glad law,
Thunders in old madness forth to war."

And as in some bleak ruin of a house
Where all the sweet, home joys are ravaged out,
And some grim, evil pack hath entered in
To tear and snarl, so the old Lancelot passed.
And where he closed the battle's fiercest shock
Did hem him round, till as a mighty surf,
That clamors, thundering round some seaward tower.
Toward him the battle roared, and clanged his shield.
And fast his blade went circling in the sun,
Like some red, flaming wheel, where'er he went;
Nor cared for friend or foe, so that he slew,
And drank his cup of madness to the death.
Till those he fought with dreamed a giant earl
Of grim old days had come once more to earth,
To fight anew the battles of his youth.

But some huge islesmen of the west were there:
And they were fain to hew him down, and came
Like swift, loud storm of autumn at him there.
Then there grew clamor of the reddest fight
That ever man beheld, and all outside
Were stayed in awe to see that one man fight
With that dread host of wilding warriors there.
Nor stayed his awful brand, but left and right
Whirled he its bloody flamings in the sun,
And men went down as in October woods
Do crash the mighty trunks before the blast,
Till all were slain but one grim islesman left.
But Lancelot by this was all one stream
Of ruddy wounds, and like some fire his brain.

And, with one awful shout of battle joy,
He sent his sword-blade wheeling in the sun,
And cleft that mighty islesman to the neck;
And crying, "Arthur!" smote the earth, and died.

Then spread such terror over all the foe,
That gods did fight with them there, that they fled.
And all that day the battle moved afar,
Out to the west by distant copse and mere,
Till died the tumult, and the night came in,
With mighty hush far over all that waste.
And one by one the lonely stars came out,
And over the meres the wintry moon looked down,
Unmindful of poor Lancelot and his wounds.
His dead, lost youth, the stillness of his face,
And all that awful carnage silent there.

The Wayfarer

HE woke with the dawning,
Met eyes with the sun,
And drank the wild rapture
Of living begun.

But he went with the moment
To follow the clue,
Ere the first red of dawning
Had drunk the blue dew.

Follow him, follow him,
Where the world will,
Under the sunlight
By meadow and hill.

Down the blue distance,
Round the world's rim,
Where the hosts of the future
Are horning for him.

Follow him, call to him,
Pray to him, Sweet,
Tell him the morning
Is fresh for his feet;

Sing him the rapture,
The glamor, the gleam,
Of pearly dew-azure
That curtains the stream;

Sing the glad thrush-note
That never knew pain,
But sing him and call him
And pray him in vain.

For ere the red dewdrop
In sunlight was pearled,
He heard that mad ocean
That whelms the world.

Yea, heard that voice calling
Past sunlight and dew,
That rarest, alluringest,
Ever heart knew.

That siren of sunrise,
That weaver of songs,
Till the heart of man hearkens
And gladdens and longs,

Till o'er the blue distance,
As opens the rose,
The yearning impulsion
Of all his life goes.

And many a dragon
Chimera so grim,
Down the dream of the morning
Is vanquished by him.

Yea, sing to him, call him through
Heartache in vain;
But the gladdest day wakened
To glory, must wane.

And the noonday he longed for
To fierce light will burn,
And the battles he wages
Grow bitter and stern,

And the surge of life sink
To the moan of a bar,
And the hopes of the morning
Grow hollow and far;

And the road that he follows,
Less luring and true,
Till he longs for a whiff
Of the morning he knew.

For he hears thy far singing,
That lures not in vain,
Till he comes to thy beauty
Of morning again.

But the roads of returning
Are never the same
As the sweet dewy meadows
Of morning we came.

But the song of alluring
Is ever as true,
To lead the heart back
To the beauty it knew.

And vain the mad magic
Where life's glories burn,
For the heart of the yearner
Who longs to return.

For he hears that voice calling,
Voiced never in vain,
To world-heart aweary
For all dreamings fain.

And he hears the low grasses
The green tents of sod,
From rooftrees of slumber
As voices of God.

And the spinning and turning,
Of madness amain,
Fade out from his dreaming
As night from the pane;

When the rosy-red splendor
In dew-dreams impearled,
From ashes of slumber,
Lifts over the world.

Yea, back to those echoes
Of bugles that blew,
Heart-weary, life-broken,
He wanders to you;

Yea, back to his truest,
Those far broken gleams
Of that rosy-red, morning-lit
House of his dreams.

Where all hours were splendid,
And all hearts held true,
In those glory-lit visions
Of beauty and you.

Yea, call to him, cry to him,
Mother of all;
You lit his youth's torches,
You saw their flames fall.

You loved him, upheld him,
This child of your breast;
And now give him surcease
In dreamings and rest.

Your note was the one note
He heard in the fray,
That bore him far out
In the heat of the day;

Your call is the one call
That beckons him home,
When day-fires darken
By forest and foam.

When o'er all the heartache,
The visions untrue,
Love draws her dim curtains
Of duskfire and dew.

While the bells ring for slumber
As out of the deep,
Come pleading those velvet-winged
Spirits of sleep.

And there at your doorways
Of slumber he stands,
Like him of old Horeb,
And sees his heart's lands;

While under the white awe
Of planets that swim,
Knows dawning and even
As one world to him.

Peniel

IN a place of the mountains of Edom,
And a waste of the midnight shore,
When the evil winds of the desolate hills
Beat with an iron roar;
With the pitiless black of the desert behind,
And the wrath of a brother before:—

In a place of the ancient mountains,
And the time of the midnight dead,
Where the great wide skies of his father's land
Loomed vastly overhead;
Jacob, the son of the ancient of days,
Stood out alone with his dread.

And there in that place of darkness,
When the murk of the night grew dim,
Under the wide rooftree of the world
An unknown stood with him,—
Whether a devil or angel of God,—
With presence hidden and grim,

And spake, "Thou son of Isaac,
On mountain and stream and tree,
And this wide ruined world of night,
Take thy last look with me:
For out of the darkness have I come,
To die, or conquer thee."

Then Jacob made stern answer,
"Until thy face I see,
Though I strive with life or wrestle with
death,
Yet will I strive with thee:
For better it were to die this hour
Than from my fate to flee.

"Yea, speak thy name or show thy face,
Else shall I conquer thy will."
But the other closed with an iron shock,
Till it seemed the stars so still,
With the lonely night, in a wheeling mist,
Went round by river and hill.

And Jacob strove as the dying strive,
In the woe of that awful place.
Yea, he fought with the desperate soul of one
Who fights in evil case:
And he called aloud in the pauses dread,
"O give me sight of thy face.

“Yea, speak thy name, what art thou, spirit,
Or man, or devil, or God?
Yea, speak thy name!” But no voice came,
From heaven or deep or sod:
And the spirit of Jacob clave to his flesh
As the dews in a dried-up clod.

Then they rocked and swayed as Autumn
storms
Do rock the centuried trees:
Yea, swayed and rocked: that other strove,
And drave him to his knees:
And Jacob felt the wide world’s gleam
And the roar of unknown seas.

Like to a mighty storm, it seemed,
There thundered in his ears:
And a mighty rushing water teemed,
Like brooks of human tears:
And opened the channels of his spent heart,
And washed away his fears.

And he rose with the last despairing strength
Of life’s tenacity,
And he swore by the blood of man in him,
And God’s eternity,
“’Tis my life, my very soul he wants;
That he shall not have of me.”

Then his heart grew strong and he felt the
earth
Grow iron beneath his feet,
And he drank the balmy airs of night
Like rose-blooms rare and sweet:
And his soul rose up as a welling brook,
His life or death to meet.

And he spake to that unknown enemy there,—

“By yon white stars I vow,
That be thou devil or angel or man.

Thou canst not conquer me now:
For I feel new lease of life and strength
In this sweat that beads my brow.”

They locked once more; the stars, it seemed,
Went round in dances dim,
Where the great white watchers over each hill,
With the black night, seemed to swim;
But Jacob knew his enemy now
Could nevermore conquer him.

Yea, still with grip of death they strove,
In iron might, until,
Planet by planet, the great stars dropped
Down over the westward hill:
And Jacob stood like one who stands
In the strength of a mighty will.

Then at that late, last midnight hour,
When the little birds rejoice,
And out of the lands of sleep life looms
With the rustle of day's annoys,
That other spake as one who speaks
With a sad despairing voice,

And cried aloud, “I have met my fate,
Loosen, and let me go:
For I have striven with thee in vain.
Till my heart is water and woe.”
“Nay, nay,” cried Jacob, “we strive, we twain,
Till the mists of dawning blow.”

Then spake that other, "I hate thee not,
My spirit is spent, alas.
Thou art a very lion of men,
Release, and let me pass;
For thou hast my heart and sinews ground
As ocean grinds his grass."

Then answered Jacob, "Nay, nay, thou liar,
This is the lock of death;
For thee or me it must be thus,
The will of my being saith,
Thou man or devil, I hold thee here
Unto thy latest breath.

"For I do feel in thee I hold
My life's supremest hour:
I would as lief let all life slip
As thee from out my power,
Until I gaze on thy hid face,
And read my spirit's dower.

"Yea, show thy face or who thou art,
Or man or angel or fiend,
I rend thy being fold from fold,
And scatter thee to the wind."
Then they twain rocked as passions rock,
When madness wrecks the mind.

For each now knew this was the end,
And one of them must die,
Then Jacob heaved a mighty breath,
With a last great sobbing cry,
And gripped that other in a grip
Like the grip of those who die.

For he felt once more his spirit faint,
And his strong knees quake beneath,
And it seemed the mountains flamed all red
At the coming of his breath;
And he prayed if he were conquered now
That this might be his death.

The tight grip eased, the huge form slipped
Back earthward with a moan,
And Jacob stood there 'neath the dawn,
Like one new-changed to stone;
For in the face of the prone man there
He read his very own.

Not as man sees who reads his fellows
In the dim crowds that pass;
Nor as a soul may know himself,
Who looks within a glass;
But as God sees, who kneads the clay,
And parts it from the mass.

And over his head the great day rose
And gloried leaf and wing,
And the little boughs began to tremble,
And the little birds to sing;
But on his face there shone a strength
Like the power of a new-crowned king.

Cain

MY hand is red with brother blood,
My heart is bleak with woe,
'Mid dark despairs a bitter brood,
Forth, forth alone I go.

By mists of dread fierce hate I grope
Forth over a wide, wide sea;
For out from love and light and hope
My sin hath driven me.

Dread, dread the portals that I face,
The foes that front me there.
And evermore back, back I trace
Old roads of death's despair.

And by the crowded demon mart,
Or by the haunted sea,
Manacled, close heart to heart,
My brute sin stalks with me.

And often in my middle sleep
I dream I see its face,
As one looks down into a deep
And sees an evil place

Of hideous holes, where slimy things
Of horror and strange woe
Round, round forever in weird rings
Of endless motion go.

And ever round me closes in
A wall both black and dread.

It is my sin, mine evil sin
That binds me to the dead.

Nor am I desolate where I track
The deserts bleak and wide;
For the great God, a shadow black,
Moves ever by my side.

I feel Him 'mid the morning dews,
And at the dread midnight;
For He alone will never lose
The murderer from His sight.

Nor brings He peace. I could not steal
A sense of happiness;
But some grim law that makes me feel
The manacles' caress.

A sense of One who ever goes
And bears my load with me,
Down roads of grim and hideous woes
And horrid agony.

Down, down, where things of doom and dree
And demon fancies ride;
And ever, ever as I flee,
That shadow by my side.

And dread, more dread than all, hath been
That sense of woe in me,
To know His greatness, and my sin
That parts us like a sea;

As down weird worlds of bale and blight
My tortured way I trace,
And ever before me blinded night
That smites the murderer's face.

Lazarus

O FATHER ABRAM, I can never rest
Here in thy bosom in the whitest heaven,
Where love blooms on through days without an
even;
For up through all the paradises seven,
There comes a cry from some fierce, anguished
breast.

A cry that comes from out of hell's dark night,
A piercing cry of one in agony,
That reaches me here in heaven white and high;
A call of anguish that doth never die,
Like dream-waked infant wailing for the light.

O Father Abram, heaven is love and peace,
And God is good; eternity is rest.
Sweet would it be to lie upon thy breast
And know no thought but loving to be blest,
Save for that cry that nevermore will cease.

It comes to me above the angel-lyres,
The chanting praises of the cherubim;
It comes between my upward gaze and Him,
All-blessed Christ. A voice from the vague dim,
"O Lazarus, come and ease me of these fires!"

"O Lazarus, I have called thee all these years,
It is so long for me to reach to thee,
Across the ages of this mighty sea,
That loometh dark, dense, like eternity,
Which I have bridged by anguished prayers and
tears.

*"Which I have bridged by knowledge of God's love,
That even penetrates this anguished glare;
A gleaming ray, a tremulous star-built stair,
A road by which love-hungered souls may fare
Past hate and doubt, to heaven and God above."*

So calleth it ever upward unto me.
It creepeth in through heaven's golden doors,
It echoes all along the sapphire floors,
Like smoke of sacrifice, it soars and soars,
It fills the vastness of eternity.

Until my sense of love is waned and dimmed,
The music-rounded spheres do clash and jar.
No more those spirit-calls from star to star,
The harmonies that float and melt afar,
The belts of light by which all heaven is rimmed.

No more I hear the beat of heavenly wings,
The seraph chanting in my rest-tuned ear;
I only know a cry, a prayer, a tear,
That rises from the depths up to me here;
A soul that to me suppliant leans and clings.

O Father Abram, thou must bid me go
Into the spaces of the deep abyss;
Where far from us and our God-given bliss,
Do dwell those souls that have done Christ amiss;
For through my rest I hear that upward woe.

I hear it crying through the heavenly night,
When curvèd, hung in space, the million moons
Lean planet-ward, and infinite space attunes
Itself to silence, as from drear grey dunes
A cry is heard along the shuddering light,

Of wild dusk-bird, a sad, heart-curdling cry,
So comes to me that call from out hell's coasts;
I see an infinite shore with gaping ghosts;
This is no heaven, with all its shining hosts;
This is no heaven until that hell doth die.

So spake the soul of Lazarus, and from thence,
Like new-fledged bird from its sun-jeweled nest,
Drunk with the music of the young year's quest,
He sank out into heaven's gloried breast,
Spaceward turned, toward darkness dim, immense.

Hellward he moved like a radiant star shot out
From heaven's blue with rain of gold at even,
When Orion's train and that mysterious seven
Move on in mystic range from heaven to heaven.
Hellward he sank, followed by radiant rout.

The liquid floor of heaven bore him up
With unseen arms, as in his feathery flight
He floated down toward the infinite night;
But each way downward, on the left and right,
He saw each moon of heaven like a cup

Of liquid, misty fire that shone afar
From sentinel towers of heaven's battlements;
But onward, winged by love's desire intense,
And sank, space-swallowed, into the immense,
While with him ever widened heaven's bar.

'Tis ages now long-gone since he went out,
Christ-urged, love-driven, across the jasper walls.
But hellward still he ever floats and falls,
And ever nearer come those anguished calls;
And far behind he hears a glorious shout.

Ahmet

This poem is founded on an old legend of North Africa, related by the late R. G. Haliburton, the noted ethnologist. According to tradition the ancient races of North Africa believed the constellation of the Pleiades to be the souls of a chieftain and six warriors, slain in battle, who are shut out from heaven and doomed to wander forever through space in search of the soul of the eighth warrior, which is identified with the lost Pleiad.

AND still the mighty river drifted on,
Under the shadowed night and moving mists,
And towered the iron mountains, dark and stern,
Under the arctic whiteness of the north.
And out of the far horizon's sullen edge
The night-winds stirred amid the lonely dead,
Stark, moveless, gazing upward at the skies,
Where silent and cold the unanswering stars
looked down.

And Ahmet raised him from the battle-field,
Where stunned he lay, beneath a Tartar horse
Huge, stiff and dead, transfixèd by a spear;
And left the awful plateau of the dead,
And stood upon the high-raised river bank,
Beneath the white stars of the wintry heaven.
And moved himself, and beat the life-blood back
Into the death-like torpor of his veins,
And looked abroad, where all the night lay still
And dim with murk far over that lone waste.
Leagues to the north, under the mighty Bear,
Folded in fog, a fleeting silver dream,
The river moved and sang into the dark,
Under the frosty splendor of the stars.

And Ahmet stood and gazed into the night,
And lifted his face up to those watchful lights

That looked from out their lonely homes on
him;
And saw the Pleiades, a tangled mist
Of moveless jewels in the sky's blue deep,
Or pale grape-cluster in some great god's hand.

And felt the old religion of his race,—
A nomad people on the northern steppes,
Who wandered from place to place tracking their
gods—

The stern, white wanderers of the trackless
heaven—

Beat in the stirring pulses of his blood.
And Ahmet prayed in his heart's agony,
Unto the fathers of his race, the gods,
For his own people in their distant home,
And for himself on this lone, desolate waste,
And the great dead, who battling through that
day,

Went to the gods from off their foemen's spears.
Then rang his song of triumph to the night,
Of those his blade loosed to the land of death,
Treading the carnage on that awful field;
Then ceased, nor ever echo answered there,
Save the far moaning of some mountain beast
Haunting the jungle by some night-ward shore.
And never a sound came over that lone waste,
Where the far mountains raised their iron heads,
And the great river sang its sleep below.
Then strode he past the pallor of the night,
Like some huge shadow 'mid the shadows there,
Unto the unwaked slumber of that plain;
And moved amid the hushed and sombre dead,
Awful and stern in their last, silent sleep,
With clotted blood congealed on shield and helm,
And stony faces staring at the stars,

Great blade or spear still clasped in each dead
hand ;

And came to where the young boy-chieftain lay,
The last grim prince of his rude southern race,
With whom he rode to battle yester morn,
Now stark and motionless beneath the stars,
With his life's foeman, silent, face to face !

And Ahmet lifted up his sombre face
To the white heaven and the stars, his gods,
And moaned, " O awful rulers of my race,
Looking from out the mighty deeps on me,
Ye who on radiant thrones of splendid light,
From out your far halls gaze upon this earth ;
And know, perchance, her motions through the
deep,

Her changes and her seasons, and perchance
The strange, weird agony and joy of man,
Who rises from her breast, as some dim mist,
Then sinks forever on her meres again :
Know ye that unto me this night is given
The woeful part to answer for the dead
Unto you gods, who rule the afterworld.
My part it is to bury this great King,
The mighty son of a once mighty race.
Now 'tis for me to hollow his last bed,
And lay the holy earth upon his face,
His breast and limbs, and shut him from the
light,
So that ye gods, in looking from your thrones,
May see no part of what is shape of him,
And curse him, banished from your halls forever.

" Yea, more ; in keeping with that ancient law,
Stern and relentless, given to my race,
And handed down the generations long,

And kept by us with solemn reverence,
I must this night find seven of our kin,
Who went out here upon this battle-field,
And lay their shapes of them with decent care,
Stark, side by side, in this young prince's grave,
Ere the white god of dawning pales yon east;
Or else this prince, beloved, noble, brave,
Who hath gone out in his old foe's embrace,
Must ever, doomèd, wander the trackless way,
Shut out from all the homes of your white
splendor

And searching forever,—like some lonesome wind
Beating about the hollow halls of night.”

Then wresting a blade from some grim foeman's
hand,
Strode once more outward to the river's bank,
Where the great waters moved beneath the mist;
And never a night-bird called from bank to bank,
But the cold river mists encircled him.
And there he toiled with quick, despairing will,
And made an opening in the wind-swept sands,
Red, desert-blown, adown the centuries.
The solemn night-winds crept about his toil,
Loosening the mists along the lonesome shores.
And now a slinking jackal wandered past,
Then stole to some far shadow of the field
To his weird feast upon the unburied dead.

Then with stern face, across the lonely field,
Like some great hero of the olden days
Working by night some splendid titan deed,
Or, as the shadow of some olden god,
Paying by night the last, sad, hallowed rites,
Over the form of some great chieftain slain;

With reverent duty to the spirit fled,
Bare he the dead young king with awful toil
Unto the grave that he had hollowed there,
With six men more, and laid them in that grave,
With faces fixed, limbs rigidly composed,
And mute, dull eyes, dumb, staring at the stars.
Then went again with agonizing tread,
As a young lioness might hunt her cub
In some great slaughter of huge jungle beasts,
And circle dumb, yet never find him there;
So he in vain, amid the silent dead,
Searching the heaps, went through the haunted
dark,
Praying the gods in his great, dread despair.
Then, sorrowing back, came to the high-raised
bank,
And saw the lonely river and the night,
The iron mountains, and those dead men there!

And now it seemed to Ahmet, standing by,
That out of the sombre shadow of that pit
Those silent faces pleaded with him there.
And well he knew that somewhere off afar
In outer space, this side Valhalla's gates,
These seven souls awaited heaven's doom.
With that a bitter sorrow filled his soul
For those, his warrior-comrades lying dead,
And that young prince whom he had loved so
well:

That they should never see Valhalla's doors
Wide-open to the welcome din within,
Of mighty warriors at eternal feasts,
And glorious songs of titan battle-joy,
Of lofty heroes, told unto the gods.
"Nor could I enter there myself," he dreamed,

“And know their joy, if that I die not here.
And did I now wend backward to my home,
And live mine after days in earthly peace,
And turn mine aged face upward by my hearth,
Surrounded by my loved, in days to come:
Could I a warrior, to the Warrior-gods
Go in, nor answer for those dead ones there,
And meet their hero faces without shame,
And know these poor ones wandering in the dark,
Despairing ever through the endless years.”

Whereat he rose and looked up to the stars,
And spake: “O Mighty Ones, it is well seen
That I must know mine olden home no more,
But I must end me here on this dread plain,
Loosening my soul, even that these poor men
May know the golden glory of the gods;
Returning never to the ones I love.”
Whereat a great sob rent his anguished frame,
And all his face, across the shadowed light,
Showed with a bitter woe, for he was young,
Scarce yet a man, and this his first of battles,
Where he had come in his fierce warrior-joy,
For that glad love wherewith he loved the king.
And far at home his aged father sat,
And his old mother, mourning for their son;
And in the dark he saw his betrothèd's eyes
Soften to tears at memory of his name.
Whereat deep anguish smote his strong young
 breast,
And looking to the sky, cried out: “O Gods!
Is there no way? A sign! great Gods, a sign!”
Whereat a splendid meteor blazed and fell
Across the silent wonder of the night,
Girding the horizon to the iron hills.

And then a thrill of greatness shook him there,
For now he knew for certain he must die.
And looking on the dead face of the prince,
He spake: "O noble soul and brave and true!
Great heart that never fled from human face,
Nor yet would go back from some wondrous
doom,

Such as is laid on thy loved comrade here!
'That such dread woes are fallen from the gods,
'Tis not for souls like mine to question why.
But I will follow whithersoever thou goest,
Thunder thy shadow-steed o'er trackless heaven.
Or to the brink of floorless night and hell.
Yet comrade, friend, forgive thine Ahmet here,
If he finds woman's grief for what he leaves.
Like thee, I never more will see my home,
My boyhood's country in its golden prime:—
The happy hearths and plains we loved of yore.
No more must see the parents of my youth,
Nor guard their age, nor close their sightless
eyes,

Nor know the joys of husband or of sire,
Of children's prattle, glad about the knees,
The loved home comforts, and the wintry fire,
And all the glories of this splendid world.
All these must I forego, nor know old age,
And the last peace at golden life's decline,
Because of some weird doom that hath been mine,
Given of old, from out the mighty gods."
Then ceased, and, with soft hands of loving care,
Took earth and laid it on the dead young king:—
Upon his face and his still, rigid limbs;
And said: "I now commend thee to the gods."
Likewise, in turn, he did unto the others,
As was the ancient custom of his race.

Then Ahmet rose and stood in his own grave,
And bearing in his hand the naked blade,
Spake: "Now am I resolved with conquering
hand

To cleave this murky curtain of my flesh,
And hew a doorway past these walls of life
Unto the outer splendor of the gods.

And ye, white watchers of the wheeling world,
O ancient makers of my doom, Behold!

O lonesome desert, wintry to the south,
O luminous stream and desolate iron hills;

Your glory will fall on Ahmet's eye no more!
And thou, my love, whose holy love was mine,
Snatched by the fates from my too passionate

grasp,

Thou wilt know sorrow when thine Ahmet's gone.

Yea, thou wilt sit across the wintry years,

Turning thy wheel by morn or sunset door,

Brooding upon a face that comes no more!

And ye my parents! One will hobbling go

Past the familiar haunts and quarrel with death

Who claimed the wrong one first. The other, she,

Will croon, with grief-filled face, the fire beside,

Peopling in vain the home with olden dreams,

And all the joyous sounds that should have been.

Farewell, O glorious stars, and sun and moon,

Now I go out upon this journey dread,

I hear my charger, slain this early morn,

Neighing beyond the gates of outer dark,

Watching for the master who should come."

Then lifting up his strong face to the skies,

Took one last look on all the wheeling worlds,

And with glad challenge to the foeman dark,

Struck home the thirsting blade to his proud

heart,

And with one mighty shout there backward fell!

Then there was heard a thunder of shadowy
 hoofs
That out of the deep wells of the night swept
 past;
And as they went a riderless steed there neighed
Joyously, to him who leaped to saddle,
With splendid mien of conqueror just returned
From some far titan battle of the gods;
Then all swept up the steep, sheer depths of
 heaven,
Thundering up the glorious slopes of blue,
Striking fire-hoofs upon the flinty air,
Onward to the ramparts of the skies,
Where some day through long ages they will
 scale,
And clang the golden gates and enter in.

But still the mighty river drifted on
Beyond the night to meet the coming day;
Beyond the iron mountains and the dark.
And out of the wintry radiance of the stars
There grew a beauty of the lonely night,
That clothed those mighty dead, and came and
 fell,
Like on some peak that fronts the far-off dawn,
On Ahmet's face, a silent majesty.

The Elf-Lover

It was a haunted youth; he spake
 Beneath the beechen shade:
"An' hast thou seen my love go past,
 A sunny, winsome maid?"

“An’ hast thou seen my love fare past,
Her face with life aflame?
The leaves astir her footsteps tell,
The soft winds blow her name.

“’Twas when the autumn days were still,—
It seemeth but an hour,—
I met her on the gold hillside
When elfin loves had power.

“Her voice was like the sound of brooks,
Her face like some wild bloom;
And in the beauty of her look
I read mine ancient doom.

“And when the world in mist died out
Down toward some evening land,
Betwixt the glinting golden-rod
We two went hand in hand.

“And when the moon a golden disk
Above the night hills came,
Down in a world of midnight haze
I kissed her lips aflame.

“But when the moon was hidden low
Behind each spectre tree;
She loosed from my sad arms and bent
A startled look on me.

“ (While wound from out some haunted dusk
A far-off elfin horn,)
Like one on sudden woke from sleep,
And fled into the morn.

“I follow her, I follow her,
But never more may see.

The crimson dawn, the stars of night
Know what she is to me.

“ I ne’er can rest, I ne’er can stay,
But speed from place to place;
For all my heart is flamed with that
Wild glamor of her face.

“ I know her soft arms in my dreams,
All wound about my sleep;
I seem to hear her silvern voice
In all the winds that creep.

“ O saw you not her come this way,
By boughs in waters glassed?
So slight her form, so soft her step
You’d think a moon ray passed.

“ O tell me did you see her wend?
And whence to hill or sea?
The ruddy dawn, the stars of night,
Know what she is to me.”

The Were-Wolves

THEY hasten, still they hasten,
From the even to the dawn;
And their tired eyes gleam and glisten
Under north skies white and wan.
Each panter in the darkness
Is a demon-haunted soul,
The shadowy, phantom were-wolves,
Who circle round the Pole.

Their tongues are crimson flaming,
Their haunted blue eyes gleam,
And they strain them to the utmost
O'er frozen lake and stream;
Their cry one note of agony,
That is neither yelp nor bark,
These panthers of the northern waste,
Who hound them to the dark.

You may hear their hurried breathing,
You may see their fleeting forms,
At the pallid polar midnight,
When the north is gathering storms;
When the arctic frosts are flaming,
And the ice-field thunders roll;
These demon-haunted were-wolves,
Who circle round the Pole.

They hasten, still they hasten,
Across the northern night,
Filled with a frightened madness,
A horror of the light;
Forever and forever,
Like leaves before the wind,
They leave the wan, white gleaming
Of the dawning far behind.

Their only peace is darkness,
Their rest to hasten on
Into the heart of midnight,
Forever from the dawn.
Across far phantom ice-floes
The eye of night may mark
These horror-haunted were-wolves
Who hound them to the dark.

All through this hideous journey
 'They are the souls of men
Who in the far dark-ages
 Made Europe one black fen.
They fled from courts and convents,
 And bound their mortal dust
With demon, wolfish girdles
 Of human hate and lust.

These, who could have been godlike,
 Chose, each a loathsome beast,
Amid the heart's foul graveyards,
 On putrid thoughts to feast;
But the great God who made them
 Gave each a human soul,
And so 'mid night forever
 They circle round the Pole.

A-praying for the blackness,
 A-longing for the night,
For each is doomed forever
 By a horror of the light;
And far in the heart of midnight,
 Where their shadowy flight is hurled,
They feel with pain the dawning
 That creeps in round the world.

Under the northern midnight,
 The white, glint ice upon,
They hasten, still they hasten,
 With their horror of the dawn;
Forever and forever,
 Into the night away
They hasten, still they hasten
 Unto the judgment day.

The Vengeance of Saki

WHEN the moon is red in the heaven, and under the
night

Is heard on the winds the thunder of shadowy horses,
Then out of the night I arise, and again am a woman;
And leap to the back of an ebon steed that knows me,
And hound him on in the wake of hoofs that thunder,
Of smoking nostrils, and gleaming eyes, and foam-
flecked

Flanks that glow and flash in the flow of the moon-
light;

While under the mirk and the moon, out into the
blackness,

Round the world's edge with an eerie, mad, echoing
laughter,

Leaps the long cry of the hate of the wild snake-woman.

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush as we
thunder!

Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to my
laughter!

Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass into
silence!

As under the night, out into the blackness forever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

I was a girl of the South, with eyes as tender

And dreamy and soft and true as the skies of my people,

But I was a slave and an alien captured in battle,

And brought to the North by a people ruder and
stronger,

Who held me as naught but a toy, to be played with and
broken,

Then thrown aside like a bow that is snapped asunder.

Lithe and supple my limbs as the sinuous serpent,
And quick as the eye and the tongue of the serpent
mine anger
That flashed out the fire of my hate on the scorn of my
scorners.
But hate soon softened to love, as fire into sunlight,
When my eyes met the eyes of the chieftain, my lord,
and my master.
Sweet as the flowers that bloom on the blossoming
prairie,
Gladder than voices of fountains that dance in the
sunlight,
Were the new and tremulous fancies that dwelt in my
bosom;
For he was my king and my sun, and the power of his
glance
To me as at springtime the returning sun to the land-
scape,
And his touch and the sound of his voice that set my
heart throbbing.

Sweet were the days of the summer I dwelt in his tent,
And glad and loving the nights that I lay on his bosom.
But woe, woe, woe, to the summer that fades into
autumn,
And woe upon woe is the love that dwindles and dies,
And ere my hot heart was abrim with its summer of
loving
I knew that its autumn had come, that his love was
another's—
A blue-eyed haughty captive they brought from the
East,
Her hair like moving sunlight that rippled and ran
With the golden flow of a brook from her brow to her
girdle.

He saw her, he looked on her face, and I was forgotten—

Yea, I and the love that fed on my soul in its anguish.

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush as we thunder!

Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to my laughter!

Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass into silence!

As under the night, out into the darkness forever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

I bowed my head with its woe to him in my anguish;
I veiled my face in my hair like the night of my sorrow;
And I pled with him there by the love that was true
and forgiving:

Oh! my lord and my love, by the days that are past of
our loving,

Oh! slay thy poor Saki, but send her not forth in her
anguish!

And I fell to the earth with my face, like the moon hid
in heaven,

In the folds of my hair. But he sate there and uttered
no answer;

And the white woman sate there, and scorned at the
woe of my sorrow.

Then I bit my tongue through that pled for the pity
ungiven.

And I rose with my hate in my eyes, like the lightning
in heaven

That leaps red to kill, with a hiss like the snake that
they called me;

And I looked on them there, and I cursed them, the
man and the woman—

The man whose lips had kissed my love into being,
And the woman whose beauty had withered that love
into ashes—

With curses so dread and so deep that he rose up and
smote me,

And bounded me forth like a dog to die in the desert.

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush as we
thunder!

Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to my
laughter!

Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass into
silence!

As under the night, out into the blackness forever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

Then wandered I forth an outcast hounded and beaten;
Careless whither I went or living or dying,
With that load of despair at my heartstrings wearing to
madness.

Long and loud I laughed at the heaven that mocked me
With its beautiful sounds and its sights and the joy of
its being,

For I longed but to die and to go to that region of
darkness

Where I might shroud me and curse in my madness
forever.

Far, oh, far I fled till my feet were wounded
And bruised and cut by the ways unkindly and cruel.
Then all the world grew red and the sun as a furnace,
And I raved till I knew no more for a horrible season.

Then I arose, and stood like one in a dream
Who, after long years of forgetting, sudden remembers
The dread wild cry of a wrong that clamors for
righting.

Then sending a curse to the heart of the night sky, I
turned me

And fled like the wind of the winter, the sound of whose
footstep is vengeance.

Late, when the moon had lowered, I entered his village,
And threading the silent streets came to the well-known
tent-door.

And dragging aside the skins with serpentine motion
Entered now as a thief where once I had entered as
mistress.

And there in the gleam of the moon, with the flame of
her hair on his bosom,

Lay the woman I hated as hell hates, the man I loved
clasped to her heart.

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush as we
thunder!

Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to my
laughter!

Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass into
silence!

As under the night, out into the blackness forever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

If hate could have slain they'd have shriveled up there
in the moonlight;

But theirs was a sin too deep for the kiss of a knife-
blade.

Long did I stand like a poisoned wind in a desert,

Grey and sad and despairing, and nursing my hate;

When out of the night, like one voice that calls to
another,

Came the far-off neigh of a horse, and a mad joy leaped
to my veins,

And a thought curled into my heart as a serpent coils
into a flower;

And I turned me, and left them there in their foolish
love and their slumber
That my hot heart hissed was their last.
Then hurrying out of the door that flapped in the
night-wind I fled,
With a pent-up hunger of hate that maddened to burst
from its sluices,
And came to a place on the plain far up and out from
the village,
Where tethered in rows of hurdles, champing and rest-
less and neighing,
Half a thousand horses were herded under the night.

Ha! Ha! I live it anew, I dream it again in my
madness.
I see that moving ocean of shimmering flanks in the
moonlight.
I snatch a brand from a watchfire that smoulders and
dwindles;
I creep around to the side of the herd remote from the
village,
I cry a low call, that is answered by a neigh and a
whinny.
Then I leap to the back of an ebon stallion that knows
me.
'Tis but the cut of a thong, a cry in the night,
A fiery waving brand like lightning to thunder,
A terrified moaning and neighing, a heaving of necks
and of haunches;
A bound, a rush, a crack of a thong, then a whirlwind
of hoofs!
Like a sweep of a wave on a beach we are thundering
onwards,
Neck and neck in the wake of my hate, that ever before
us
Clamors from heaven to hell in its terrible vengeance!

With neck outstretched and mad eyes agleam in the
gloaming,

I see on ahead the sleeping huts in the moonlight.

Ha! Ha! they will rest well under the sleep that we
bring them!

See, see, we are nearing them now; the first wild
thundering hoof-beats

Have ridden them down, 'mid the shriekings and
groanings of anguish,

Blotting them out with their loves and their hates into
blackness.

Ha! Ha! ride, ride, my beauties, my terrible tramlers!
Pound, pound into dust the mother, the child, and the
husband!

Pound, pound to the pulse of my hate that exults in
your thunders!

Ha! over the little ones nestled to suckle the bosom,
Over the man that I loved, we thunder, we thunder!

Over the woman I hate with the flame of her hair on
his bosom;

Trampling, treading them down out into silence and
blackness.

Like the swirl of a merciless storm we sweep on to
darkness forever!

And now, when the moon is in heaven, and under the
night

Is heard on the winds the thunder of shadowy horses,
Then out of the dark I arise, and again am a woman;
And leap to the back of an ebon steed that knows me,
And hound him on in the wake of hoofs that thunder;
While under the mirk and the moon, out into the
blackness,

Round the world's edge with an eerie, mad, echoing
laughter,

Leaps the long cry of the hate of the wild snake-woman.

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush as we
thunder!

Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to my
laughter!

Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass into
silence!

As under the night, out into the blackness forever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

The Last Ride

It seems his
soul had lived
that moment
before, when
he should come
to the dread
place.

I KNEW of it ages before,
Yea, it seemed that the years knew it too;
That I should come to that shore,
Where the foam and the wild waters flew—
Where the winds and the bleak night
blew;—
And the name of that place, No More.

That he and
she and death
should ride
together.

I knew of it ages ago,
That I should thunder that ride,
With her and the night for my woe—
With her and death by my side—
Her and her pitiful pride;—
And the long hours whose shudd'ring flow

Where the
black was as
Eblis, and the
sounds as
worms moving
in a grave.

Grew, while the black grew thick
As the close, hot air of a cave
In Eblis, where death-watches tick,
Like the moving of worms in a grave;—
Grew, till the dawn outdrave
The black night, shudd'ring and sick.

The mimes
chant their
despair to the
night.

Who were the mimes in the air
That wept for the woe of our flight,
That chanted a bitter despair,
To the dark, haunted heart of the night—
That knew not of wrong or of right,
Save but of the moments that were?

He sees the
past, as ruined
sunsets, and
the early morn-
ing of life.

The ruins of sunsets that hung
On the far, reeling edge of the world;—
The long-uttered thoughts that upsprung
Like the ghosts of a past that was furled,
Where the dreams of a life were impearled,
In a morning for evermore young!

She also knew
the demons
that haunted.

And she; she knew even as I,
Of the phantoms that haunted us there;
Of the demons that never could die,
While the world's heart pulsed our despair;
And out where the mad waters fare,
The ghostly, wan shorelands should lie.

They ride by
the hoarse sea,
and the bitter
winds and hell
with them.

O, that night, and that terrible ride—
With the bitter, sharp wind in the face,
And the hoarse, great tongues of the tide,
As it beat on the black of that place;
Till all hell joined in the race,
With death and despair for a guide!

He slays the
foes of his
guilty thoughts,
while the
demons trouble
him.

Many the foes that I slew,
With the sword of my guilt, red as blood—
Many the demons that blew
Their mad flame-horns through my mood,
As I thundered that horrible wood,
To the place where a world went through.

Now he hates
the morrows
to come

White, meagre, the days yet to come
Seemed wintry and hateful to me:
Would mornings wake, pitiless, dumb,
With horror and dread agony—
And the moan of that terrible sea
Beat the dead-march of life like a drum

with the
remorse for
his wrecked
days.

In the hands of some hideous mime—
Some strange, inextinguishable flame
That would burn at my heart for all time—
Some horror too dread to have name,
As of one who had played for a game,
Then slipped and was lost in the slime?

He knows the
end cometh.

(I am but the poor wreck of a man,)
When I came to that horrible place,
(Love was never a part of God's plan.)
And looked her and death in the face,
And knew me unworthy and base,
And the shores where the black waters
ran;—

They come to
the outer shore
and look each
on each through
the mists, and
read the ancient
curse there,

When we came to that lone outer shore,
Where the world sundered, parting us two;
(God and the dread nevermore!)
When we came where the thick mists blew,
So face could scarce on face, through,
Read the woe-rune of earth's ancient
lore;—

and feel the
dread agony of
parting. Their
souls feel for
one another as
the seas for
the land.

When hand stretched longing for hand,
And that strange, wild cry of the soul;
As the feeble sea feels for the land,
Or a racer far, far from the goal;—
So we, ere we drank of death's dole,
Knew the black night that hope never
spanned.

But he knows
the hour has
come,

Then I knew as I looked on her face,
(Black, black is the night and the rain,)
Sweet as a flower in that place,
And heard the hoarse roar of the main;
That this was the hour for us twain,
The last, bitter end of the race.

and the anguish
at the gate of
the nevermore.

And I gripped her as man only grips
The last gift that God has for him,
And lived with my lips on her lips
An age that was anguished and dim;
And time was as bubbles that swim,
Or the hailing of out-faring ships.

They plead in
vain with time
while their
doom waits.

We pleaded and haggled with time,
With time who was haggard and hoar;
And met the dread hell of our crime,
While fate stood there at the door;—
With our doom in his hand he upbore,
Till I heard each second's beat chime.

He feels that
they died there.
He is but a lost
wreck on the
coast of the
ages ere the
evil had power.

And I know now we died in that hour:—
I am all but the ghost of a man,
A mariner stranded ashore
On some continent out of God's plan,
Made before misery began,
Or evil got men in its power.

And dreams a
dead life with
but one thing
real for him
which he liveth
over and over
forever, that
night and the
woe that her
face held.

In dreams my imaginings trace,
I feel I lived somewhere before,
Ere life was, in some phantom place,
Some land of the haunted No More;—
But, O God, that night and that shore,
And that ride, and the woe of her face!

The Violin

YEA, take all else, my life, or what you will,
But leave me this. What is it unto you?
A few thin shriveled bits of carven wood,
Time-stained and polished, curved to curious form,
With strings to scrape on that a man might buy
For a few farthings. You say 'tis a Cremona?
'Tis naught to you or others, but to me
My joy, my life! Once more my hand grows strong
To clasp its curves and feel its soul vibrate
Throughout my being; for, believe me true,
It is mine other self. Yea, sit and hearken,
And I will make it speak, yea, sing and sob,
And weep and laugh and throb its strings along
The gamut of the passions of this life.
For here dwell melodies that Mozart played,
When he would call the angels of heaven down
Along the golden ladders of his dreams.
Here sleep those notes vibrate wherewith Beethoven
Did open up those tragic wells of music,
And loose the prisoned ministers of sound;
Wedding them to harmonies such as never
Before or after, save God or angel, heard.
Here pulse those magic dances that throb through
The sensate universe, keeping it in tune,
Warming the sunlight, bluing the azure of heaven,
Swaying the tides to harmonies of the moon:—
That stir those demon revellers of the deep,
And charm the rages of those ruined souls
'Mid horrified wakings of their eternal sleep.
Hark now the tender melodies of this song.
It is a charm-song stolen from faeryland,
Filled brim with spiced melodies of sleep.

Now 'tis the rest of night, the breathing woods,
The dewy hush of dawn, the peace of even,
Or slumber of noon-day, 'tis an infant's breath.
Till higher, shriller, it strikes the notes of woe,
The harsh, discordant clangor of human strife:—
Then, louder, stronger, to the strident note,
The echoing, vibratant clarion horn,
Or brazen trumpets, with their blatant throats,
Bugling along the battlements of the world.—
Ah, God! it breaks in discord,—I have done.

I am degraded, old, I go in rags;—
The children cry at me along the streets;
Your lords and ladies shudder and scorn me by;
Your glittering palaces are barred against me;
Your power and splendor alien to my life:—
But what is wealth to him who holds my riches,
What splendor to the splendors that I draw
From out this shriveled universe of sound?

'Tis nothing but a bit of withered wood,
Cunningly built, and welded into shape,
With some few strings a groat or so might buy.—
But when I die I will beg them place it near me,
Within my coffin, close here to my heart;
That through the long, lone autumn night of death,
My spirit may vibrate to its living strings,
Immortal with the chords that Mozart struck,
That Paganini played, Beethoven rang.

And when I wake, if ever there be waking,
Beyond that awful sleep that follows life,—
My soul will wing to heaven on its strings,
For did I know, how could I plead with God
Without its melodies to voice my love,
And heaven no heaven without my violin.

Songs from "Mordred"

"AND WHO'D BE WISE?"

Dagonet—

And who'd be wise
And full of sighs,
And care and evil borrow;
When to be a fool
Is to go to school
To Happy-go-luck-to-morrow?

Who'd tread the road,
And feel the goad,
And bear the sweatsome burden;
When loves are light,
And paths are bright
Of folly's pleasant guerdon?

Sigh while we may,
We cannot stay
The sun, nor hold its shining.
So joy the nonce,
We live but once,
And die for all our pining.

Who'd be a king
And wear a ring
And age his youth with sorrow;
When to be a fool
Is to go to school
To Happy-go-luck-to-morrow?

"BLUE IS THE SUMMER MORNING'S SKY."

Blue is the summer morning's sky,
And birds are glad and merry.
And Anna's eyes are sweet and sly,
Her cheeks like any cherry;—
Her lips like dewy rosebuds are
Upon the gladsome morning.
She is my love, my heart's glad star,
In spite of all her scorning.

So fill the cup of gladness up
And drink to youth and morning.
Let sadness go with evening sup,
I'm hers for all her scorning.

"MORNING HER FACE IS"

Morning her face is,
Blue seas her eyes,
All of earth's sweetness
In their light lies.

Coral her lips are,
Red reefs of doom,
There do Love's ships drive
Down to their doom.

There would I shipwreck,
Swooning to death,
Passing to darkness,
On the winds of her breath.

"LOVE."

O Love, that lights this world,
Yet leaves us i' the dark;—
I led thee to my couch,
A grave-cloth was thy sark!
O Love, we would be clothed,
And thou hast left us stark.

Lancelot (crazed) sings—

Once there was a castle hall,
Fair, fair to see,
Armored dight, and splendored all,
Filled with shout o' revelry.
Came the hosts o' fate and rage
Thundered on its walls amain.
Sunken now like ruined age,
Never laughs its light again.

I loved a Queen and she loved me.
Aye, that were long ago!
Come now wrack, come now woe,
Strike now lightning, beat now snow!
Memory, I'll ha' none o' thee!

Dagonet sings—

There may be poison in the cup
But still the foam must cling.
To keep the strong world's courage up
Poor fools must laugh and sing;
With sobs below and smiles above,
A-masking day by day,
On trampled, bleeding hopes of love.
So whirls the world away!

There may be breaking of the heart,
Though merry laughs the eye.
Still we poor fools must act our part,
And laugh, and weep, and die.
Still must we sportive battles wage,
With foam of lightsome breath,
While underneath the currents rage
And wrecks are churned to death.

Dagonet sings—

It rose upon the month o' May,
When woods were filled with laughter;
Came Margery tripping up the way,
And Jock a-stealing after.

It rose in Autumn's afternoon,
When love was dead and laughter;
That Jock went striding 'neath the moon,
And Margery pining after.

Sonnets

Our Heritage

Nor all the fire of Burns, the mind of Scott,
The stern and holy human zeal of Knox,
Nor that wise lore which human life unlocks
Of magic Shakespeare, Bacon's subtlest thought,
Nor Milton's lofty line sublimely wrought,
Not gentle Wordsworth 'mid his fields and flocks,
Nor mystic Coleridge of the wizard locks,
Hath power to raise us to our loftiest lot :

But that rare quality, that national dream,
That lies behind this genius at its core,
Which gave it vision, utterance ; evermore,
It will be with us, as those stars that gleam,
Eternal, hid behind the lights of day,
A people's best, that may not pass away.

The Builders

EACH fane we build is part of God's great thought,
One stone in His rare temple thundered down
In some old wreck of wisdom's past renown.
So we rebuild, in each gold hour rebought
From life's dread waste of folly foiled and fraught,
With falsity, where in her tinsel crown
Philistia's Queen doth laugh all effort down,
While Nature's eremites toil and heed her not.

So we rebuild, till, in some afterday,
'Mid dreams confused this temple rears its dome,
To point to men a fairer, gladder way,
To ease earth's being down to its long home,
And make life greater for those weary men
Who toil in trade's mad mart or care's grim fen.

The Higher Kinship

LIFE is too grim with anxious, eating care
To cherish what is best. Our souls are scarred
By daily agonies, and our conscience marred
By petty tyrannies that waste and wear.
Why is this human fate so hard to bear?
Could we but live with hill-lakes silver-starred,
Or where the eternal silence leaneth toward
The awful front of nature, waste and bare:

Then might we, brothers to the lofty thought
And inward self-communion of her dream,
Into that closer kin with love be brought,
Where mighty hills and woods and waters, wan,
Moon-paved at midnight or godlike at dawn,
Hold all earth's aspirations in their gleam.

Nature the Benign

NATURE, the terrible, cruel, deaf, malign!
So men have named her in their vague alarm,
Who know her outward only. Never harm
Came to the soul that read her secret sign,
Lived her pure laws, and dreamed her dream benign,
That broodeth eternal ever kind and warm,
With rare imagination's ancient charm,
Where all her lores and kindred loves entwinc.

Not hers the working of blind woes and ills,
Unanswered hunger and the futile breath
Of wasted suffering and unneeded death;—
Behind the formless mask, the seeming strife,
Bound by a law as old as her own hills,
She is a spirit, and her joy is life.

The Soul

WHAT bears me up? 'Tis not this earthly frame,
These vigorous limbs, this solid teeming earth,
That bore me patient ever since my birth;
But something inward, some fierce mystic flame,
For which our language hath no subtler name
Than spirit: some dread hidden lamp of life,
Behind the ego dense, the passions rife,
That looks far out and dreams from whence it came.

Those others weaken. Fever, sin, disease,
The shock of mountains and great toppling seas
Shatter their being: this that dwells within
Knows other base of power more secret, dread,
Drawn forth, eternal, from some fountain-head
Of power and life, where sense hath never been.

My Religion

LET other men to other faiths defer,
This is my creed, I live by it alone:
Not unto gods of self or carven stone
Do I bow down 'mid mists of mind that blur;
Let myriad schools their myriad truths aver,
Place Superstition on her ancient throne,
Or callous Reason to reign in ice alone;
Earth's truth was never taught by her, or her.

This is my creed, where each man hath his own,
God is a spirit, love with insight blends,
Make to thyself earth's rarest, highest friends,
Truth, wisdom, beauty: let all else alone;—
Beyond all doubts and dread dogmatic fears,
These speak for God along His ancient years.

Toleration

TOLERATION for the alien soul,
Who thinketh different from thy special dream
Of how earth's freedom widens its pure stream
To this world's splendid, ultimate, mighty whole:
Yea, toleration for the one whose goal
Is equal, though 'tis reached by other ways:
For other dreams of other hopes and days:
While over all the same wide heavens roll.—

But for the tyrant, he who would enslave:
Wouldst tolerate the wolf thy child would clutch,
The eating flame, the rude engulfing wave
That would destroy thee? Nay, nay, unto such
The barrier walls, the iron gates that gird,
The dread denial, the hate, the sanguine sword.

September

AS ONE who lieth on a bed of death,
And knowing in truth that he hath soon to die,
For months and months in silent dream doth lie,
And mind grown clear, his whole life pondereth,
And sees it fade before him like a breath
That smokes a glass; so thou, hushed month, dost
dream
The whole year's memories in thy quiet gleam
Of inward thought that no speech uttereth.

Here, haply, musing by thy silent fields,
Thy ripened woods, thy brown, shorn harvest floors,
And hazy hillsides, he who seeks may find
The sort of soul he is, and at thy doors
Of inward contemplation lend his mind
To those high reveries nature's heart reveals.

Nature's Truth

NATURE, give me thy truth, for I am worn
With outward knowledge of this surface world.
Men know thy trees, thy hills, thy clouds uphealed,
Thy dreams at even and thy dews at morn,
Thy great sky-temples, domed or thunder-torn;
Thy lakes, thy rivers hushed or seaward hurled,
Thy limpid brooks, thy grasses dew impearled,
And all thy beauty love or wonder born.

But that rare glory, that invisible,
Undreamed-of vision of thine under deeps,
That face behind earth's face that never sleeps,
That mystic word our wisdom fails to spell,
Which man calls genius, that sincerity,
That magic seeing heart, give, give to me.

The Truth

NOT what is true in this place or in yon,
But what is truest for the whole world's ill,
Rolling its stone eternal up its hill,
Or Ixion-like, stretched fate's grim wheel upon,
Hungering long o'er opportunity gone;
Or like blind Samson, grinding his grim mill,
Crippled and futile; yet with one sweet thrill
For some old springtime or unrisen dawn;

That somewhere, sometime, through the fateful years,
Earth's disappointment and her urgent strife,
Man's soul might reach some outer door of life;
And stripped of folly's garb and time's poor fears,
Grow large and godlike, as those cloud-dreams furled,
And splendid deeps that drift about the world.

Life's Inferno

I STOOD last night on Dante's bridge of woe,
And saw that awful host of those who pass,
Like phantom shadows on a wizard's glass,
In all dread miseries of the stygian throe.
I saw the fated lovers come and go
In agony of love's despair, alas,
Ixion's wheel; and Sisyphus' taunting glass
Escape his lips amid the hellish glow.

But nowhere saw I ill so great as here
Goes grinding sadly, patient day by day,
Jealousy, hate, yon miser aged and grey
Gripping his gold with mocking death anear;
Or that dread dart of all dread woes above,
Earth's agony of unrequited love.

Death

WHEN He who built this magic wizardry
Of sky and earth and sea and human heart,
And planning brain and all that holdeth part
In fleeting joy and quick mortality,
From azure peak to purpled rim of sea,
Shall come again, and by His wizard art
Dissolve the pearl, and bid the guest depart
From this high house of being's majesty:—

May He not come as summons shrill at morn,
Or sudden tempest shaking life's frail tower,
Or angry black when storms and tempests lower;
But soft at even ere the stars be born,
And love lets down her gradual veils of sleep,
So my soul pass from splendid deep to deep.

The Consolation of the Stars

WHERE white Orion rules the hosts of night,
And grim Arcturus wheels his ancient round,
If there be any soul by earth-weight bound,
Let him here come, and if he hath a blight
Of poisoned spirit, let him note the flight
Of those great seers of centuries, without sound,
Patient, orderly, in their mystic swound,
Wheeling forever eternal hills of light.

Let him here pause; and if he hath a care,
A poisoned arrow rankling in his heart
Of human sorrow, or ill too great to bear,
From off his spirit like mists it will depart,
And in these dreams 'twixt golden dusk and day
Rebuild his soul for its appointed way.

True Insight

THEY never know who only know alone.
Who deeply knows must also deeply feel.
Life is a knife ground on a grinder's wheel,
A sea-worn crag, a river-polished stone.
Knowledge for suffering doth to love atone.
O who would not to grim experience kneel,
And feel the fiat of fate's averted heel.
To know in truth the great world's under-moan.

There in her dungeons where her weird mimes flit,
Behind the curtains of her phantom show,
With grim reality for aye to sit,
And watch those puppet-maskers come and go,
Who build the shadow-dreams that rise and fall,
Grotesque, distorted, on life's sombre wall.

The House Divine

Not in the caverned aisles of cloistered gloom,
Or chancelled splendors built in carven stone,
Where censer smoke goes up and choirs intone
Those sad dread litanies of human doom,
That lend an added horror to the tomb;
Nor where the modern dervish maketh moan,
And smites his forehead with impenitent groan.
Doth faith's rare flower of reverence wake and
bloom:

But out in hallowed halls of dawn or night,
Where overhead the censer stars outswing,
Eternity and night in one vast ring,
Or hid impulses of inmoving light;
Behind him all the mystery of his race,
Doth man with Deity come close face to face.

"Not Unto Endless Dark"

Not unto endless dark do we go down,
Though all the wisdom of wide earth said yea,
Yet my fond heart would throb eternal nay.
Night, prophet of morning, wears her starry crown,
And jewels with hope her murkiest shades that frown.
Death's doubt is kernelled in each prayer we pray.
Eternity but night in some vast day
Of God's far-off red flame of love's renown.

Not unto endless dark. We may not know
The distant deeps to which our hopings go,
The tidal shores where ebbs our fleeting breath:
But over ill and dread and doubt's fell dart,
Sweet hope, eternal, holds the human heart,
And love laughs down the desolate dusks of death.

The Wind's Royalty

THIS summer day is all one palace rare,
Built by architects of life unseen,
In elfin hours the sun and moon between,
Up out of quarries of the sea and air,
And earth's fine essences. Aladdin's were
But tinsel sheen beside this gloried dream,
High, sunny-windowed, walled by wood and stream,
And high, dome-roofed, blue burnished, beyond
compare.

Here reigns a king, the happiest known on earth,
That blithesome monarch mortals call the wind,
Who roves his galleries wide in vagrant mirth,
His courtier clouds obedient to his mind;
Or when he sleeps his sentinel stars are still,
With ethiop guards o'ertopping some grave hill.

Nature's Sincerity

Not by fine straining above our natural powers,
Or standing tiptoe over greater heads,
Do we beget that greatness nature weds
To her sure actions and her patient hours.
Nor yet by building arrogant Babel towers,
And aping genius, do we spin those threads
Of grave existence, which the world besteads
When fortune fails and life's horizon lowers.

Not thus doth Nature tread her patient rounds
In gloom of darkness or in wine of light.
Flaming the wheel of her slow fixèd bounds,
Revivifying day in womb of night:
Plodding her dream in mists of mightiest powers,
Working her miracles in her natural hours.

The Soul's Cloister

AMID the mighty struggles of the day,
The burdened armies of huge toil enlocked,
In trade's grim battle-grounds ambition-rocked,
And busy marts of all the world's loud fray,
The truer moods of being flee away,
With all the gentler dreams of life that flocked
From love's hyperion fields, now cursed and mocked
By iron mouths and brazen throats that bray.

But in the hush of those diviner hours,
The meditative silences of night,
When Nature reasserts her holier powers,
And all false dreams and garish take their flight,
Those rarer moods of dream return to dwell
'Mid these white towers of truth invisible.

Earth's Innocence

WRAP me, kind Nature, in thy fold of dreams,
Out from this life and its brute-selfishness,
Its anguished strivings for the boons that bless,
Its base ambitions and its bauble gleams
That lure poor souls, like foolish fish in streams,
From sunbeam into sunbeam; profitless.
Make me a part of thine own happiness,
With which thy realm, honey-nurtured, teems.

Give me once more thine olden innocence
Of bird and bee; the sunshine-built romance
Of hour to hour, by wood and field and deep;
Co-heir with those blithe wanderers of thy fields,
To whom alone life's open-sesame yields,
Like little children, morning, flowers and sleep.

Love

THE truest is the simplest. Why entail
Whole days of years to some complex pursuit,
To probe life's flower and analyze its fruit?
O weary student, perplexed, spectre-pale,
Why beat against the granite of thy gaol,
Self-built; or kill the flower to search the root?
Doth lore make mankind any less the brute?
Or knowledge alone for godlike flight avail?

'Tis love draws all from earth to heaven's heights.
Not all thy weary lore of sleepless nights
Hath power to touch like one low daisied sod;—
'Tis love, not lore, whatever come to pass.
We are but child-kin to the birds and grass,—
And he who yearns, life's heir, and kin to God.

Foundations

WE are what nature made us: soon or late,
Life's art that fadeth passeth slow away,
With iron eatings of our sordid day,
Leaving behind those influences, innate,
Immutable, divine. As round some great,
Rude, craggy isle, the loud surf's ravening fray
Shatters all life in spume of thundered spray,
Leaving huge cliffs, scarred, grim, in naked state:

So life and all its idols hath its hour,
Its fleet, ephemeral dream, its passing show,
Its pomp of fevered hopes that come and go:
Then stripped of vanity and folly's power,
Like some wide water bared to moon and star,
We know ourselves in truth for what we are.

The Poet

HE sings and sings; ye cannot stop his lute;—
Hunger and misery, death and man's disdain,
And all that grieves and gives poor mortals pain,
Sorrow and shame—these cannot make him mute.
Brother to days that gather little fruit,
Shunned by the mob, and scorned of sordid gain,
He walks his way for love and music fain,
Loving poor life that song be at its root.

And when spring eves are red or ozier-pale,
He wanders where earth's children lisp their tale
To tender skies whose misty stars look down;—
And all love's realms are his, the budding hours
Of children, brooks and winds and grass and flowers,—
A king whom death alone may dare uncrown.

The Politician

CARVEN in leathern mask or brazen face,
Were I time's sculptor, I would set this man.
Retreating from the truth, his hawk-eyes scan
The platforms of all public thought for place.
There wriggling with insinuating grace,
He takes poor hope and effort by the hand,
And flatters with half-truths and accents bland,
Till even zeal and earnest love grow base.

Knowing no right, save power's grim right-of-way;
No nobleness, save life's ignoble praise;
No future, save this sordid day to day;
He is the curse of these material days:
Juggling with mighty wrongs and mightier lies,
This worshipper of Dagon and his flies!

Sublimity

THAT rarer essence, that which lies behind
Our truest beauty, light of beauty's core,
Where all truth rises, font of wisdom's lore,
Back of all dreams of human heart and mind,
At life's great well heads where earth's gropings,
blind,

Fumble for Deity round their caverned floor,
As some great water feeling for his door.
Azure of ocean, where sea-caverns wind :

So in our nature's far recessional deeps
It dwells, this greatness, at the heart of things.
Where wisdom broods with ancient folded wings.
And all those hid impulses of earth's youth.
All know this presence sometime 'mid life's ways.
Only the few who follow love and truth
Feel earth's sublimity all their human days.

The Patriot

BORN with a love for truth and liberty,
And earnest for the public right, he stands
Like solitary pine in wasted lands,—
Or some paladin of old legends, he
Would live that other souls like his be free,
Not caring for self or pelf or pandering power,
He thunders incessant, earnest, hour by hour,
Till some old despot shackle cease to be.

Not his the gaudy title, nor the place
Where hungry fingers clutch his country's gold :
But where the trodden crouch in evil case,
His cause is theirs, to lighten or to hold ;
His monument, the people's glad acclaim ;
And title high, a love more great than fame.

Night

HOME of the pure in heart and tranquil mind,
Temple of love's white silence, holy Night;
Greater than splendid thought or iron might,
Thy lofty peace unswept by any wind
Of human sorrow, leaves all care behind.
Uplifted to the zenith of thy height,
My world-worn spirit drinks thy calm delight,
And, chrysalis-like, lets slip its earthly rind.

The blinded feuds, base passions and fierce guilt,
Vain pride and falseness that enslaved the day,
Here dwindle and fade with all that mocks
and mars;
Where wisdom, awed, walks hushed with lips
that pray,
'Neath this high minster, dim, invisible, built,
Vast, walled with deeps of space and roofed
with stars.

Job

IN all that olden Israelitish lore
Whose lofty beauty fills the ages' span,
'Mid all those mighty souls who being bore,
There was one man, a king, who lived a man.

Smitten of heaven, scourged of all earth's woes,
With love and kinship, wealth forsworn and fled;
Stung by those friends, worse ills to men than foes,
Tormenting where they might have comforted:—

Stripped of all hopes that common men hold dear,
Polluted of body, clothed with leprous scars,
There 'mid his ashes alien from his race,
He still maintained his being without fear,
And lifting agonized eyeballs to the stars,
Did question Deity, naked, face to face.

On a Picture of Columbus

Nor for one age was it given thee to be;
Out-living all in thine immortal span,
Thou wondrous, titan, godlike minded man;
Earth's little lives comparable to thee
As meadow tans unto the mighty sea;
'Mid few great souls, create since time began,
Thy spirit ever seems to brood and scan,
Strong, self-contained, time's lone immensity.

Nor dread Atlantic did thy purpose daunt:
Scorning the trackless paths toward ocean's verge,
Thine eyes sought ever where Hesperides haunt,—
Thy spirit rode above all weak despair,
Seeing in visions gleaming coasts emerge
Out of the Wild and Limitless, waste and bare.

Shelley

SPIRIT of fire and snow and heart all dew,
Child of the midnight's glory and the stars,
Whose mad, sweet chanting smote to heaven's bars :—
Brother, ethereal, to that glorious few
Who from earth's beauty song's high triumphs drew ;—
Beyond the earthy, like some paler Mars,
Winging above thine age's petty jars,
Thy song to heaven meteor-like out-flew.

First came one great in love's majestic calm,
The wizard singer of all singing men ;
Then he who sang in high immortal psalm
That greatest of all love's great, sad rebels. Then
Thou camest, angel of the starry lyre !
Raining the dusk with melody of fire.

Sagas of Vaster Britain



Britain

GREAT patient Titan, 'neath thy wearying load
 Of modern statecraft, human helpfulness;
 To whom do come earth's weak in their distress
 To crave thine arm to avert the oppressor's goad:
 Thou sovereignty within thine isled abode,
 Hated and feared, where thou wouldst only bless,
 By fools who dream thine iron mightiness
 Will crumble in ruin across the world's wide road,—

Though scattered thy sons o'er leagues of empire's rim,
 Alien, remote, by severing wind and tide;—
 Yet every Briton who knows thy blood in him
 In that dread hour will marshal to thy side:—
 And if thou crumblest earth's whole frame will groan.
 God help this world, thou wilt not sink alone!

Canada

THOU land for gods, or those of old
 Whom men deemed gods, of loftier mould,

Sons of the vast, the hills, the sea:
 Masters of earth's humanity:

I stand here where this autumn morn
 Autumnal garbs thy hills adorn,

And all thy woodlands flame with fire,
 And glory of the world's desire.

Far northward lie thy purple hills,
Far vasts between, thy great stream fills,

Ottawa, his fleet tides impearled,
From deep to deep, adown the world.

O land, by every gift of God
Brave home of freemen, let thy sod,

Sacred with blood of hero sires,
Spurn from its breast ignobler fires.

Keep on these shores where beauty reigns,
And vastness folds from peak to plains,

With room for all from hills to sea,
No shackled, helot tyranny.

Spurn from thy breast the bigot lie,
The smallness not of earth or sky,

Breed all thy sons brave stalwart men,
To meet the world as one to ten.

Breed all thy daughters mothers true,
Magic of that glad joy of you,

Till liberties thy hills adorn
As wide as thy wide fields of corn.

Let that brave soul of Britain's race
That peopled all this vastness, trace

Its freedoms fought, ideals won,
Strength built on strength from sire to son.

Till from thy earth-wide hills and seas,
Thy manhood as thy strength of trees,

Thy liberty alone compare
With thy wide winnowed mountain air,

And round earth's rim thine honor glows,
Unsullied as thy drifted snows.

To the Canadian Patriot

THIS is the land of the rugged North; these wide,
Life-yielding fields, these inland oceans; these
Vast rivers moving seaward their wide floods,
Majestic music: these sky-bounded plains
And heaven-topping mountains: these iron shores,
Facing toward either ocean; fit home, alone,
For the indomitable and nobly strong.

In that dread hour of evil when thy land
Is rent with strifes and ground with bigotry,
And all looks dark for honor, and poor Truth
Walks cloaked in shadow, alien from her marts,
Go forth alone and view the earth and sky,
And those eternal waters, moving, vast,
In endless duty, ever rendering pure
Those mild or angry airs; the gladdening sun,
Reviving, changing, weaving life from death:
Those elemental uses nature puts
Her patient hours to; and then thou shalt know
A larger vista, glean a greater truth
Than man has put into his partial creeds
Of blinded feud and custom. Thou wilt know
That nature's laws are greater and more sure,

More calm, more patient, wise and tolerant,
Than these poor futile efforts of our dream;
That human life is stronger in its yearning
Than those blind walls our impotence builds between;
And underneath this calloused rind we see,
As the obedient tides the swaying moon,
A mightier law the whole wide world obeys,
And far beyond these mists of human vision
God's great horizon stands out fixed and sure.

To the United States

O THOUSAND years of Britain's pride,
One hundred of your own,
Of throbbing fires of liberty
Bred in your blood and bone;
O stalwart 'mid the nations
To-day alone you stand,
The fate and being of a world
Within your puissant hand.

And shall the scale say bloodshed,
Or shall the word be peace?
Shall brute and blind and cruel Force
Rule, or his thunders cease?
Shall man go back a century,
And dream an alien dream,
Of clashing arms, of sabre stroke,
Of leaguered shore agleam?
Or shall the world go forward
To wisdom and surcease
Of brutal strife, to the higher life
Of brotherhood and peace?

O thousand years of Britain's pride,
One hundred of your own,
Child of the greatest mother-stock
The world hath ever known;
Who hold within your honor,
Who keep athwart your pride,
The hope or wrecking of a world;
Hold back the bloody tide!
Show men that justice, patience,
Are nobler far than hate,
You with your million valiant hearts
Entrenched by each sea-gate.
You who could hurl the eastern world
Back into either sea,
Show, greater far than iron force,
'Tis peace that rules the free,
That far from western granite gates
Old battles' smoke hath blown;
Thou thousand years of Britain's pride,
One hundred of your own.

Responsibility

MAN is not evil when he stands alone,
'Tis in the aggregate he loses truth,
And builds him up life's weakness by his ruth.
No single conscience makes its brother moan.
The slaving toiler withered to the bone,
The wasting age ere life hath garnered youth,
No single soul hath done this; each and all
We add a pebble to a mighty wall
That shuts this world from freedom and God's truth.

The Race

THIS mighty dream of the race!
When, O when will it die?
When the magic of being burns from the blood,
When the violet fades from the sky,
When the mother turns from her child,
When the son his father spurns:—
And the blood of the mightiest race on earth
To bloodless water turns.

The Answer

THEY whisper that you are dying,
Mother of mine and me:
Like a sick old eagle crying
Out of the northern sea:

But we answer, mother, O mother,
Back to thy breast we come,
We of thy breed and seed and none other
From the beat of the alien drum.

Loud was the new world song
That wooed and beckoned and won;
Long was the day, and long
The roads of water and sun;

But after the alien dream,
After the alien tongue;—
Sweet to creep to the true, to the old,
To the love that ever is young.

England

This poem was adapted to music and sung at the Coronation Bazaar as a greeting to the Queen as she entered.

ENGLAND, England, England,
Girdled by ocean and skies,
And the power of a world and the heart of a race,
And a hope that never dies.

England, England, England,
Wherever a true heart beats,
Wherever the armies of commerce flow,
Wherever the bugles of conquest blow,
Wherever the glories of liberty grow,
'Tis the name that the world repeats.

And ye, who dwell in the shadow
Of the century-sculptured piles,
Where sleep our century-honored dead,
While the great world thunders overhead,
And far out, miles on miles,
Beyond the throb of the mighty town
The blue Thames dimples and smiles;—
Not yours alone the glory of old
Of the splendid thousand years
Of Britain's might and Britain's right
And the brunt of British spears;—
Not yours alone, for the great world round,
Ready to dare and do,
Scot and Celt and Norman and Dane,
With the Northman's sinew and heart and brain,
And the Northman's courage for blessing or bane,
Are England's heroes too.

North and south and east and west,
Wherever their triumphs be,
Their glory goes home to the ocean-girt Isle,
Where the heather blooms and the roses smile,
With the green Isle under her lee.
And if ever the smoke of an alien gun
Should threaten her iron repose,
Shoulder to shoulder against the world,
Face to face with her foes,
Scot and Celt and Saxon are one
Where the glory of England goes.

And we of the newer and vaster West,
Where the great war-banners are furled,
And commerce hurries her teeming hosts,
And the cannon are silent along our coasts;
Saxon and Gaul, Canadians claim
A part in the glory and pride and aim
Of the Empire that girdles the world.

Yea, England, England, England,
Wherever the daring heart
By arctic floe or torrid sand
Thy heroes play their part;—
For as long as conquest holds the earth,
Or commerce sweeps the sea,
By orient jungle or western plain
Will the Saxon spirit be;
And whatever the people that dwell beneath,
Or whatever the alien tongue,
Over the freedom and peace of the world
Is the flag of England flung.

Till the last great freedom is found,
And the last great truth be taught,

Till the last great deed be done,
And the last great battle is fought;
Till the last great fighter is slain in the last great
fight,
And the war-wolf is dead in his den,
England, breeder of hope and valor and might,
Iron mother of men.

Yea, England, England, England,
Till honor and valor are dead,
Till the world's great cannons rust,
Till the world's great hopes are dust,
Till faith and freedom be fled;
Till wisdom and justice have passed
To sleep with those who sleep in the many
chambered vast,
Till glory and knowledge are charnelled, dust in
dust;
To all that is best in the world's unrest
In heart and mind you are wed:—
While out from the Indian jungle,
To the far Canadian snows,
Over the east and over the west,—
Over the worst and over the best,
The flag of the world to its winds unfurled,
The blood-red ensign blows.

The World-Mother

(Scotland)

By crag and lonely moor she stands,
This mother of half a world's great men,
And kens them far by sea-wracked lands,
Or orient jungle or western fen.

And far out 'mid the mad turmoil,
Or where the desert-places keep
Their lonely hush, her children toil,
Or wrapt in wide-world honor sleep.

By Egypt's sands or western wave,
She kens her latest heroes rest,
With Scotland's honor o'er each grave,
And Britain's flag above each breast.

And some at home.—Her mother love
Keeps crooning windsongs o'er their graves,
Where Arthur's castle looms above,
Or Strathy storms or Solway raves.

Or Lomond unto Nevis bends
In olden love of clouds and dew;
Where Trosach unto Stirling sends
Greetings that build the years anew.

Out where her miles of heather sweep,
Her dust of legend in her breast,
'Neath agèd Dryburgh's aisle and keep,
Her Wizard Walter takes his rest.

And her loved ploughman, he of Ayr,
More loved than any singer loved
By heart of man amid those rare,
High souls the world hath tried and proved,

Whose songs are first to heart and tongue,
Wherever Scotsmen greet together,
And, far-out alien scenes among,
Go mad at the glint of a sprig of heather.

And he, her latest wayward child,
Her Louis of the magic pen,
Who sleeps by tropic crater piled,
Far, far, alas, from misted glen;

Who loved her, knew her, drew her so,
Beyond all common poet's whim;—
In dreams the whaups are calling low,
In sooth her heart is woe for him.

And they, her warriors, greater none
E'er drew the blade of daring forth;
Her Colin* under Indian sun,
Her Donald† of the fighting North.

Or he, her greatest hero, he,
Who sleeps somewhere by Nilus' sands,
Grave Gordon, mightiest of those free,
Great captains of her fighting bands.

Yea, these and myriad myriads more.
Who stormed the fort or ploughed the main,
To free the wave or win the shore,
She calls in vain, she calls in vain.

Brave sons of her, far severed wide
By purpling peak or reeling foam,
From western ridge or orient side
She calls them home, she calls them home.

And far, from east to western sea,
The answering word comes back to her,

* Colin Campbell, Hero of Lucknow.

† Sir Donald Mackay, 1st Lord Reay, whose Mackay Dutch Regiment was famous in the Thirty Years' War.

“ Our hands were slack, our hopes were free,
We answered to the blood astir;

“ The life by Kelpie loch was dull,
The homeward, slothful work was done,
We followed where the world was full,
To dree the weird our fates had spun.

“ We built the brig, we reared the town,
We spanned the earth with lightning gleam,
We ploughed, we fought, 'mid smile and frown,
Where all the world's four corners teem.

“ But under all the surge of life.
The mad race-fight for mastery,
Though foremost in the surgent strife,
Our hearts went back, went back to thee.”

For the Scotsman's speech is wise and slow,
And the Scotsman's thought it is hard to ken,
But through all the yearnings of men that go,
His heart is the heart of the northern glen.

His song is the song of the windy moor,
And the humming pipes of the squirling din;
And his love is the love of the shieling door,
And the smell of the smoking peat within.

And nohap how much of the alien blood
Is crossed with the strain that holds him fast,
'Mid the world's great ill and the world's great
good,
He yearns to the Mother of men at last.

For there is something strong and something true
In the wind where the sprig of heather is blown;
And something great in the blood so blue,
That makes him stand like a man alone.

Yea, give him the road and loose him free,
He sets his teeth to the fiercest blast,
For there's never a toil in a far countrie,
But a Scotsman tackles it hard and fast.

He builds their commerce, he sings their songs,
He weaves their creeds with an iron twist,
And making of laws or righting of wrongs,
He grinds it all as the Scotsman's grist.

.
Yea, there by crag and moor she stands,
This mother of half a world's great men,
And out of the heart of her haunted lands
She calls her children home again.

And over the glens and the wild sea floors
She peers so still as she counts her cost,
With the whaups low calling over the moors,
“Woe, woe, for the great ones she hath lost.”

The Lazarus of Empire *

THE Celt, he is proud in his protest,
The Scot, he is calm in his place,
For each has a word in the ruling and doom
Of the empire that honors his race:

* Written before the Boer War.

And the Englishman, dogged and grim,
Looks the world in the face as he goes,
And he holds a proud lip, for he sails his own
ship,
And he cares not for rivals nor foes ;
But lowest and last, with his areas vast,
And horizon so servile and tame,
Sits the poor beggar Colonial
Who feeds on the crumbs of her fame.

He knows no place in her councils,
He holds no part in the word
That girdles the world with its thunders
When the fiat of Britain is heard ;
He beats no drums to her battles,
He gives no triumphs her name,
But lowest and last, with his areas vast,
He feeds on the crumbs of her fame.

How long, O how long, the dishonor,
The servile and suppliant place?
Are we Britons who batten upon her,
Or degenerate sons of the race?
It is souls that make nations, not numbers,
As our forefathers proved in the past,
Let us take up the burden of empire,
Or nail our own flag to the mast.
Doth she care for us, value us, want us,
Or are we but pawns in the game ;
Where lowest and last, with our areas vast,
We feed on the crumbs of her fame?

Show the Way, England *

SHOW the way, England!
We are your children,
Pass us not by;—
Full five million
Children of Canada
True as of yore:—
Blood of your blood and
Core of your core;—
Speak not the treason,
Write not the lie,
Bred of the blood of you,
We are not alien,
Pass us not by.

Show the way, England!
Not in your ignorance,
Passing your children
Over in silence,
Oblivion hurled;—
Buying the traitor,
Lauding the alien,
Will you build Empire,
Wide as the world;—
But by showing your
Children you love them,
Know them as kindred,
Blood of the one blood,
Where the wide wheelings
Of Empire are whirled.

* Written in answer to a poem, "Show the Way, Canada," printed in the *London Spectator*.

Show the way, England!
We will follow you,
We, whose fathers were
Victors with Wellington,
Masters with Nelson,
Under the old flag
That flapped at the Nile;
We late children
Of those intrepid,
Who, scaling the vast-heights,
Won you, with Wolfe,
Canada's glorious
Mile upon mile.

They, too, our brothers,
Loyal Canadian,
Valorous, chivalrous,
Sons of Montcalm;—
They are not alien,
Speak not the lie,
They, too, for Britain
Have died and will die;—
They are not alien,
Helot, out-cast,
But blood of the old blood,
Norman of William,
Victors at Hastings,
Builders of England,
Heirs of your wonderful,
Glorious past.
Ocean or land, for you
They, too, will stand for you—
Show the way, England!

Show the way, England !
Forward to justice,
Freedom and right,
Onward to glory and
Wisdom's increase,
We will follow you,
Sons of the might of you,
Smokeward to battle
Or sunward to peace.

Show the way, England !
Not in the bright hour,
But in the dark hour,
When the world threatens,
We are your sons ;—
Not for the might of you,
Shelter and right of you,
Not for the paid-coin,
Not for your guns ;—
But that we love you,
Suckled at breast of you,
You are our Mother !
We are your sons !

Show the way, England !
And in the fated
Din of the battle,
Stand you alone ;
Loyal Canadian,
Sons of the sons of you,
Back of the guns of you,
Bone of your bone ;—
We will stand four-square,

Rock of the rock of you,
Ribs of the steel of you;—
Darkness or light,
Let the world thunder;—
Ere you go under,
We will follow you,
 Might of your might!

Not of the alien,
We of old Scotland,
We of old England,
We of old Ireland,
We of old Normandy,
We are your sons;—
We are Canadian,
Helot to no one,
Freedom enfranchised
Heirs of this strand;—
We of old England,
We of old Ireland,
We of old Scotland,
We of old Normandy—
Britons, the sons of you,
Brand of your brand.

Show the way, England!
We are your children,
In peace or in battle
To conquer or die;—
We are not alien,
Speak not the insult,
Write not the lie;—
We whose fathers were
Thanes with Great Alfred,

Loyal at Runnymede,
Norman at Hastings,
Or Scotch at Lucknow ;—
Speak not the treason,
Write not the lie,
Blood of the blood of you
Leaps in reply ;—
Only be true to us,
Open your heart to us,
Lead you to danger,
To glory or night ;—
We will follow you,
Blood of the blood of you,
Might of your might !—
 Show the way, England !

Show the way, England !
Let that grim master
Of earth's dread disaster,
Let the war shadow
But darken your sun :—
Trust your child, Canada,
She will be with you,
Shoulder to shoulder,
Gun to your gun :—
She will reply with you,
Fight for you,
Die with you.
So wide to the world,
Be the old flag unfurled !
 Show the way, England !

The Children

Out of the vasts of the world,
From the beat of the alien drum,
Back from the wanderings far,
Do the ancient children come.

Back from the isles of the east,
Back from the sunset wall:
Calling Mother, soul of our soul,
Do the ancient children call.

Back from the visions of toiling,
Out from the dreams of gold,
From the endless striving and yearning
The children return to the fold.

Back from the alien roads,
Of *ignis fatuus* gleam,
Back to the mother, back to the home,
Do the hearts of the children dream.

There is cry that the race is sinking,
Breed of the Albion isle,
That the strong arm sinks, that the sinew
shrinks,
And the lie and the cheat beguile;

But we are your children, Mother,
We at your breasts have fed,
We will not leave you, life of our life,
Dead of our olden dead.

Gather, as war clouds gather,
Hordes of the world afar,
We are the deathless sons of the race,
Stars of the olden star.

Sons of the ancient sunrise,
Children of granite and dew:
We yet will drink of the dreams on your
brink,
Hills of the heather blue.

Reckon thy dead, O Albion,
Reckon thy latest blood,
Sons of the strong, where the sunlight long
Floods the round world in its flood:

Reckon on us, O Albion,
Let the world's jackals but spring,
We will be yours while earth endures,
While earth and the earth-roots cling.

Strong is the flag, O Children,
Whereunder your breed are born,
Strong is the love of the dwelling-place,
And sweet is the homelight's morn:

But stronger far yet is the race-tie,
The kinships that kindle and bind,
And evermore true to the breed and the thew
Are the sons of the world-old kind.

Yea, back to the ancient mother
The earth-wide children yearn,
Who fared to achieve, to dream, to glean,
To wrestle, to build, to learn.

But as ashes the vast achievement,
And weary the hearts that pray,
When the old blood dreams and the old love
gleams
In the hearts of the Far-away.

Back 'mid the world's wide seething,
Its witch-pot brew that boils:
Back from the buying and selling of earth
From the chaos of battles and toils.

The hearts of the far-swept children
To the ancient mother turn.
When the day breaks, when the hour comes,
The world will waken and learn.

Not the one flag, not the two flags,
But the blood that wakens and stirs:
The world may claim them, the world may
name them,
But the hearts of the race are Hers.

Briton to Briton: An Appeal

WE have come to the ways, O Brothers,
To the grim considering place;
And is it to be together,
Or chaos, and end of the race?

We of the ancient people,
We of the lion line;
Will a shoulder of earthhills hold us apart,
Or billowy leagues of brine?

We of the speech of Shakespeare,
We of that breed of men
Who of old in earth's stern battles
Conquered as one to ten.

Is our world-wide task eternal?
Ever new lands to win?
Is it trade forever and ever,
And never a thought of kin?

Lands to northward and southward,
Continents east and west,
Freed by our liberty, genius,
Where alien peoples are blest!

Are we to scatter and scatter,
Losing our olden dream;
And all for a curse of commerce and trade,
An *ignis fatuus* gleam;

That men may say the Briton,
The ancient race holds sway?—
But who are the rulers in truth, in right,
And who are the conquered, pray?

The vote of the one man conquers
Under this freedom of ours;
And north and south, and east and west,
Slowly dwindle our powers.

Lost to our ancient manhood,
The freedom our fathers had won;
Conquered slow by the alien vote,
Under an alien sun.

Is it evermore business, business,
On to the end of time?
Are the markets our only Empire bonds?
Is sentiment worse than a crime?

Is the freedom, the faith of Britain,
To be sold and bartered away,
That our rulers may hold a spectre of power
Over millions of acres of clay?

Are the centuried dreams of a people,
Co-heirs of high dreaming and worth,
To be crushed and stifled for harbors
On alien coasts of the earth?

Will it ever be business, business,
Eternal markets to win;
Trade, and its curse forever,
And never a thought of kin;

While the sons of the race are drifting
Slowly and surely apart;
And the giant soul of a people is crushed
In the greed of the world's wide mart?

Canada*

ARE there none to speak and save?
Canada, my own, my own.
From western peak to eastern wave?
Canada, my own, my own.
Are there none to lift and save,
Must you sink in helot grave,
Crushed in gyve of thief and knave?
Canada, my own, my own.

* Written at a time when the Press of both parties was filled with accounts of gross political corruption.

Are there none to wake the dead,
O people unto grossness wed?

Canada, my own, my own.
Must this cursèd trade go on,
Franchise but a bartered pawn,
Freedom, thought and honor gone?
Heaven strike or send a holier dawn
To Canada, my own, my own.

Must the hideous tale be told?

Canada, my own, my own.
Men like puppets bought and sold,
Freeman's rights for place and gold?
Canada, my own, my own.
Must this hideous lie go on?
Are we but degenerate spawn
Of a greater people gone?
Canada, my shamed, dishonored own.

Canada, my own, my own,
Lie in the dust and make your moan,
Dishonored by those very ones
Who should have been your truest sons,
Like ship on surfs that overwhelm,
With some false captain at the helm,

Canada, my own, my own.
Creep in the dust and make your moan;
To childish superstitions doomed,
Or in material greed entombed,
Your people sleep through sordid years
Of modern doubts and deeds and fears.
Lie in the dust and make your moan;
Poor Canada, my own, my own.

O wherefore wonder when our life
Is all one shrunken party strife,

When every question of the hour
Betrayed to greed of party power,
When every voice for truth is stilled,
Save that which party spake or willed.
With pandering pulpits, venial press,
God send redress, God send redress
To this poor human wilderness,
A people for high dreamings meant,
But damned by too much government.

O dream in vain your future power,
And build in vain your heart's high tower ;

O Canada, my own, my own.
When you have sold the olden truth,
That greatness which inspired thy youth,
And bartered for a sordid gleam
The light of all your highest dream,
With all the gross, material strife
Of godless, money-hungered life,

O Canada, my own, my own ;
Your children, they have dragged you down
And trampled all your old renown,
As some base harlot of the town,

O Canada, my own, my own.

O splendid dream of plain and lake,
When will you from this curse awake,
And with new-kindled honor take
Your place with those who guide the helm
Of Britain's mighty people realm?
When will you, raised to that regard
Of self, above the market yard
Of life's low levels, hold your share
In Britain's mighty world-wide care?

O Canada, my own, my own !

O wide thy lands and wide thy sky,
Canada, my own, my own!
But wider yet the living lie
That we have lived, my own, my own!
Let us arise from our old graves
Of self and ill, as o'er the waves
God's dawn from night, to that which saves.
Canada, my own, my own:
Rise and strike the shackles free
That bind us lip and heart and knee,
And be what God dreamed we should be,
Canada, my own, my own.
Loved Canada, my own!

Victoria

(Jubilee Ode, A.D. 1897)

With thunder of cannon and far-off roll of drum,
And martial music blaring forth her glory,
'Mid miles of thronging millions down each street
Where all the earth is bound in one heart-beat,
The world's great Empire's greatest Queen doth come.
Borne on one mighty, rocking, earthquake voice
Wherein all peoples of wide earth rejoice—
She comes, she comes, to beat of martial drums,
And pageants blazoning England's ancient story:
The good, gray Queen whose majesty and worth
Have lent their radiance to remotest earth;
While the splendor and might and power of her mighty
empire bound her;
And the serried millions, mad with joy, are near her,
All to love her, none to fear her,
But nearer far than power, than splendor dearer,
The surging love of her loved people round her.

She comes, she comes, encircled by her people,
While praise to Heaven peals out from tower and
 steeple,
Into the great cathedral, hushed and dim,
With thankful heart and humble, queenly head
Over the sleep of England's mighty dead,
To render up her heart's best thoughts to Him,
The King of kings—'mid hush of priestly tread,
And gloried anthem's solemn pealing hymn.
The mighty millions, awed, now bow the head,
Thank Heaven for her simple, noble life.
Earth's queenliest Empress, mother, daughter, wife!
Thank Heaven for all she held her dearest own!
Forgiveness for the weakness she hath known!
Blessings on her wise, old widowed head,
For what her life is now, and what her life hath been,
Noble mother, wife and Queen!

Let the mighty organs roll, and the mighty throng
 disperse!
She is ours, and we are hers.
And both are Britain's. Both to Britain's God
Lift up the heart-felt praise for the might of splendid
 days,
For the glory that hath been.

Let the cannon thunder out, and the miles of voices
 shout:—Victoria!
Let the bells peal out afar, till the rocket tells the star,
And the ocean shouts its pæan to the thunder-answer-
 ing bar:
England's glory, Britain's pride,
Revered of half a world beside,
O good, gray Queen, Victoria!

Daughter of monarchs, mother of kings;
All her sorrows we have shared.
All her triumphs they are ours.
Kind Heaven, that virtue still endowers,
Be with her, may her path be flowers;
Be with her, may her days be spared!
Death aloof, with shadowing wings,
Unto nature's latest hours!
Daughter of monarchs, mother of kings.
O good, gray Queen, Victoria!

Let all feuds of faction die,
Let all blaring party bugles cease to blow,
Let insincere and base detraction lie,
With sore defeat and bitterness, her carping sisters, low,
In this one supremest hour,
Day of Britain's ancient power,
Day of all her golden dower,
Of victory-towering centuries, tower on tower!
Let all hatreds be forgot,
All bitterness be swept away,
Remembering only the glory of our lot
In this century-honoring day!
Celt and Scot and Saxon, let us only know,
A mighty Queen comes to her own at last,
Her people's love and reverence—as the glow
Of some splendid western heaven,
Deepening into richer even,
Ere it purples to the vast.

Past the mailèd gates of fears,
The hooded menace of the years,
Where rang the iron voices rolling on her ears,
Of royal dreams the requiem and pall;
And awful fates of thrones foredoomed to fall;

Our aged Queen, on this glad day she stands,
Amid the throbbings of her land's great love,
Firm in her rule, her faith in God above.
Earth's golden keys of happiness on her hands.
O splendid life of Britain's splendid days!
O noble soul, above all blame or praise!
O fame that will outlast our little fame!
O long-enduring honor greater than time or death!
O name that will outlive even that immortal name,
England's more ancient glory, the great Elizabeth!

And we, thy loyal subjects far away,
In these new lands that own thy sceptre's sway,
Betwixt thy Royal Isle and far Cathay—
Across the thunder of the western foam,
O good, gray Queen, our hearts go home, go home,
To thine and thee!
We are thine own while empires rise and wane,
We are thine own for blessing or for bane,
And, come the shock of thundering war again,
For death or victory!

Not that we hate our brothers to the south,
They are our fellows in the speech of mouth,
They are our wedded kindred, our own blood,
The same world-evils we and they withstood,
Our aims are theirs, one common future good—
Not that we hate them, but that there doth lie
Within our hearts a golden fealty
To Britain, Britain, Britain, till the world doth die.

And him we send thee as our greatest son,
The people's choice, to whose firm hand is given
The welfare of our country under heaven;
No truer son hast thou in all thy coasts,

No wiser, kindlier, stronger, Britain boasts,
Our knightly leader, Norman in his blood,
But truest Briton in heart and speech and mind,
Beloved well of all his fellow-kind,
In statesmanship our nation's highest mood,
Our silver-tongued and golden-hearted one.
In every inch and every thought a man,
Our noblest type, ideal Canadian!
Receive him, 'mid those, greatest, thou dost own.
Thy mighty empire-builders, bastioning round thy
throne.

O England's latest, greatest Queen,
Greatness more great than all her greatness that hath
been,
Under thy sceptre the outmost continents hang,
And trackless oceans thunder out their surges.
These are thy realms. Never in earth's old story
Hath Queen of earthly realm owned such resplendent
glory,
Not golden Homer such wondrous kingdoms sang:
Round earth's wide girdle thy mighty empire verges,
Out-splendoring all prophecy of olden days.

Thou latest and greatest on that throne whose base
Withstood the shock of centuries, still withstands
The lowering hate of Europe's iron bands,
In thy true keeping shall that sceptre be
A golden wand of happiness to the free
Who call thee Queen from outmost sea to sea,
That throne to them a mighty lighthouse tower,
A truth-compelling majesty of light
Blinding the mists of ignorance and night,
Where round its base throughout the centuries' flight
Thunder in vain earth's hosts upon its iron power.

The Lament for the Chief

(On the late Duke of Argyll)

O HONE a rie! O hone a rie!
Alas, great Cailen lieth now
Like stricken pine in Inverie!
The galley waits by lone Lochow
To bear where Kilmun's sleep beguiles
The mighty chieftain of the isles.

He sleeps where glen and mountain blur,
And Caledonia rocks her pine;
Who, long and faithful, leal to her,
Great daughter of his royal line,
And true to Empire's noblest cause,
Moulded her wisdom in her laws.

And o'er the doorways of his rest
The sign of lineal glory stands,
The galley of his ancient West,
To bear his soul to loftier lands,
Those isles of Scotland's mighty soul
And splendors of her spirit's goal.

There he will sleep in lordly dream
Until the last dread pibroch wakes
The centuried hush of glen and stream,
And far by misted hills and lakes,
Each plaided warrior grimly stands
At God's dread gathering of the clans.

There let him dream, as through his sleep,
Like mists that sweep by Ben Lui,
Or surge of Jura's mighty deep,
The armies of the years go by,
In myriad visions of that vast
Of Scotland's splendor, Scotland's past.

Old sounds of far-heard battle call,
Or mountain-misted shieling song,
Or warder's call from castle wall
Of right's high challenge unto wrong;
Or that old fealty, man to man,
Of feudal chief and faithful clan.

Dreams he once more the mighty years
Of mailèd targe and ringing shield,
Of Scotland's sorrow, Scotland's tears,
For those of fatal Flodden's field;
When 'mid mad wreck of Lord and Crown
All else save honor thundered down.

Or those old struggles for the right,
'Mid conquering truth and ancient wrong,
When Scotland, in her iron might,
Led forth her bannered hosts along,
In that unconquered spirit, stern,
Of Douglas, Bruce and Bannockburn.

O hone a rie! O hone a rie!
Like mountain mist or drifted snow,
Through years of Scotland's dream and
dree,
The glories of her great dead go:—
And grief's sad pibroch moans full sore
The memories of McCailen More.

Aye, stilled for aye the mighty brain,
And hushed for aye the magic tongue,
Whose lofty accents ne'er again
Will thrill Westminster's Halls among;
When, first of Britain's barons, he
Spoke brave for truth and liberty.

O hone a rie! O hone a rie!
No more the chieftain's eye shall glow,
Hushed is his spirit's minstrelsy;
The mighty fighter lieth low,
Who served his country, served his clan,
And fought to free his brother man.

And we his kinsmen severed wide,
Proud heirs of mighty O'Duin's fame,
By every zone and wind and tide,
Who bear the ancient, storied name;
In heart respond to Argyll's woe
For lofty Cailen lying low.

We, children of the royal house,
True to the blood whate'er befall,
In lineal dreams our hearts arouse,
Responsive to that ancient call.
By glen and misted mountain brow,—
Of Campbell; and the dread Lochow!

Mafeking

MAFEKING, little Mafeking, the pride of the world goes
down,

But thine the splendor of days to come, and honor of
great renown:

Little city of Afric wilds, bleak by thine Afric streams,
Unknown yesterday, to-day thou art great 'mid the
world's great dreams.

Many a mighty onslaught, many a victor's sweep
Of serried charge on chivalrous charge up some world-
storied steep—

Many a splendid victory, great in the world's renown;
But never a nobler, truer courage than held thee, little
town!

Not thine the splendid onslaught, the victory sudden
won;

The deed of valor done in a night, or under one glorious
sun;

But thine the long, long waiting, the dying by slow
degrees,

The sad, slow-eating horror of hunger and dread disease;
While the foe outside lay waiting, devils in men's
disguise,

With murderous hell of shot and shell, 'neath the
murderous Afric skies;

Many a deed of heroes, high in the world may shine,
But never a deed, O Mafeking, truer and greater than
thine!

Town of thy towns, O Britain, which is thy greatest?
Say!

Is it thy great, grim London, gloried and storied and
grey?

Is it thy mighty seaport, crown of thy wealth's great
crown,

Whence unto the many ports of the world thy myriad
ships go down?

Is it thy northern Athens, city of chivalrous fame,
With her great learned dead, her sainted tombs, her
monarchs of deathless name?

Are these thy glory, O Britain? Thy splendors of
peace are these—

Marts of thy wonderful wealth of the world, thou mis-
tress of widespread seas!

But nearer than these and dearer to the heart of the
Empire's pride

Is the little town of the splendid few where Britons for
Britain died—

Yea, greater by far and higher, for story and glory to
come,

When the mighty names of the world are writ in the
books of the thunder of drum.

Dust, in thy great world city, the dead of thy great past
sleep:

Storied and gloried in marble column, and honored of
those who weep,

Names of a centuried honor, lives of a world's renown,
But none of them greater or truer than those who sleep
in thy little town!

Men and women and children, England, these were
thine;

Hearts that knew one duty, to die but never repine!

To fight and to suffer for England, for the glory of
England's name!

To fight and suffer and struggle, but never that one
great shame,

To yield old England's honor unto the world's wide
blame!

Weeks, long weeks of waiting, watching for succor to
come;
To burrow in earth like rabbits, to wake to the thunder
of drum;
Through months, long months, life-eating nights of
fever and pain,
Days of watching and hunger borne with a brave
disdain;
Bodies disease-racked, deathward, lips firm, fixed to the
foe,
To send to the traitor's "Surrender" the Briton's
thundering "No!"
To answer them back with their cannon to the last gun's
last grim round,
As Britain has answered ever, afloat or greatly aground.
These be thy soldiers, O England! Care for them,
honor them, thine!
Greater than bulwarks of granite or iron, thy bulwarks
from brine to brine!

Months that eked out slowly, as long-drawn miseries
go;
Inside hunger and care and pain, outside the angering
foe;
With grim death treading daily the streets of the little
town,
Where gaunt-eyed sorrow in woman's guise went
patiently up and down,
While near in the woman's laager the children's grave-
yard grew,
Headstone after headstone, till the toddling feet were
few;
And hope deferred grew paler, as under the Afric sky,
Moment by moment, as drowning men sink, they
watched their loved ones die.

This for thine honor, O England; and may thy heroes
be few
To suffer the sorrows for thy great sake thy heroes of
Mafeking knew!

Bravely, as brave men ever, they bore up day by day,
Toiling to hold the city's might and the evil foe at bay,
With the minute gun at morning their sole, dread *matin*
bell,
And the hideous hum of the maiming shot their only
funeral knell;
Till after months of slaughter, and famine, hunger and
pain,
There broke on their ears the ringing shout of British
cheers again;
When bursting through the circling lines in the early
morning's glow,
They beat the grim leaguerer back in defeat and con-
quered the conquering foe.

Never such mad, wild cheering had the leaguered city
known;
Never such laughing and shaking of hands in the streets
of the little town;
Never such solemn prayers to God as rose to Heaven
that day
From lips of men who pray and fight as Britons fight
and pray.
These be thy heroes, O England, these be thy brave
sons, these,
Greater than bulwarks of granite or iron, thou mistress
of world-wide seas;
These be thy sons who come at thy call where the ends
of the wide earth meet;
These be thy sons to conquer and save, but never to
know defeat.

Town of thy towns, O Britain, which is thy greatest?
Say!
Is it thy great, grim London, gloried and storied and
grey?
Is it thy mighty seaport, crown of thy wealth's great
crown,
Whence unto the many ports of the world thy myriad
ships go down?
Is it thy northern Athens, city of chivalrous fame,
With her great learned dead, her sainted tombs, her
monarchs of deathless name?
Are these thy glory, O Britain? Thy splendors of
peace are these—
Marts of thy wonderful wealth of the world, thou mis-
tress of widespread seas!
But nearer than these and dearer to the heart of the
Empire's pride
Is the little town of the splendid few where Britons for
Britain died—
Yea, greater by far and higher, for story and glory to
come,
When the mighty names of the world are writ in the
books of the thunder of drum.

Our Bit of "The Thin Red Line"

THEY have gone with a people's hopes and
prayers,
Out over the eastern brine,
To strike for the might of Britain's right,
This bit of "the thin red line."

And over our loyal land to-night,
Where the stars of our freedom shine,

From all true hearts the prayer goes up
For our bit of "the thin red line."

They have gone to fight the freeman's fight,
For our far-off kith and kin;
Brothers of our own blood and breed,
In the fight where the right must win:

For the sacred cause of freedom's laws,
To win the glad release
Of those who tread 'neath tyrannies dread,
And widen the gates of peace.

We send them forth from our "True North,"
For sacred bond and sign,
That well or ill, to the great brave end,
We are Britons from brine to brine;

And whenever the Lion's hunters are out,
And danger threatens his lair,
Be the world on this side, he on that,
Canadian hearts are there;—

And stand or fall, though we go to the wall,
Canadian hearts are true,
Not only to stand for our own birthland,
But to die for the Empire too.

Yea, we send them forth, from our "True
North,"
Sons of the Empire's might;
And alien the heart that will not pray
For our soldier-boys to-night.

Yea, traitor the heart that takes our bread,
And drinks our free sunshine,
That will not throb when the battle joins,
For our bit of "the thin red line."

Return of the Troops

(Ottawa, November, 1900)

CANADIAN heroes hailing home,
War-worn and tempest smitten,
Who circled leagues of rolling foam
To hold the earth for Britain;

When rose War's red and angry wraith,
Duty and death before you;
Our pledge to Empire of our faith,
You went and boldly bore you.

When late October, loath to die,
His wintry strain had sung us;
You kissed fond lips, and dauntlessly
Went marching from among us.

Your moment came; in letters large
You retold Britain's story;
At Paardeberg's immortal charge
You wrote our name in glory.

When sad November's grief doth throw
His autumn weird upon us,
You come returning with the glow
Of all the fame you've won us.

We hear old Britain praise your name,
The voice of Empire calling;
And glory leaps up as the flame
Of red leaves lately falling;

But O! the ones whose breasts are stilled,
Past all our strife and yearning;
Whose hero hearts in earth are hilled,
For whom is no returning;

For whom no morrow hath its birth,
Or chapter of life's story;
Who sleep far off in alien earth,
Who died for Britain's glory;

Who heard the call and bravely rushed
Where shot and shell were flaming;
We think of them, and hearts are hushed,
Amid the wild acclaiming;

We think of them, those voiceless ones,
Whose absence speaks more loudly
Than all these gleaming ranks of guns
Of victors marching proudly.

We think of them, and up along
The miles of shouting madness,
The wild, glad surging, jubilant throng,
A silence goes of sadness.

Yea, sadness, but exultantly;
For though in earth beneath us,
In far-off, alien graves they lie,
Our dead go marching with us.

Far, far in London's mighty heart,
Where life goes blindly thronging,
Leagues from the homes they loved, apart
The land of all their longing.

In marbled columns, side by side,
Britain—the glory-giver,

With all her mighty dead who died,
Will write their names forever;

Great, with the great of victories won
From Waterloo's red lava,
To that famed line that thundered on
To death at Balaclava.

But here in their own loving north
Where maples leaves are falling,
And all the nation's heart goes forth
Unto her great dead calling;

Her noble and her gallant sons,
Beyond our mad to-morrow,
Will wait the last great matin guns,
Enshrined in our high sorrow.

Higher than storied shaft above,
Than gilded pomp's acclaiming,
Ennobled in a people's love,
Past all heroic naming.

Crowning of Empire

(Ode written for the Coronation, in June, 1901)

THOU latest bloom of liberty-loving states,
Peerless, new-found, thou vast imperial flower,
Thou dream of patriots, golden possibility,
As yet untried, unweighed in fortune's balance,
The hope of few, the wonder of the many,
Thou splendid pinnacle of human days,
Whereby earth's aliens linked in speech and blood
And heart allegiance to one flag, one throne,

One common dream of liberty and rule,
Do come together, one imperial whole,
In world-wide common amity of blood,
And equal vision, nursing one high resolve
Not to be crushed by this ignoble day,
Where many voices jargon many tongues,
And hatreds foiled, and superstitions dire,
Cloaked in poor freedom's many-chequered garb,
Do crouch and snarl and wait to strike thee down.

In this auspicious, high imperial June,
This month of summer yearning to his tide,
And all divine emotions of the year,
'Tis meet that in that centre of world-force,
That arbiter of destinies obscure,
Where all the glowing, blossoming Junes do meet,
Of world-ambitions, on whose golden reefs
Do break the mighty beatings of the world,
That there from whence her myriad sons went out,
To build, to fight, to conquer or repel,
Back to her strength her conquering sons return.

From all those lands of alien summers and suns,
Of winters and despairings nobly met,
Her hosts of children now return once more,
Her wide imperial hosts, with symbols dear,
Of silvern links of blood and golden speech,
To crown her empire when she crowns her king.
Not mine to praise where many falsely laud,
And in high-sounding numbers ape the strain
Of some divine Apollo; rather my task
Of admonition to those, loyal, who read
Impending danger yet are wisely strong;
Who in the sunlight know the black'ning storm,
And build the safety 'gainst the coming ill.

Yea, would I rather raise prophetic voice,
Amid this majesty and high acclaim,
This vast supreme laudation of a world,
To warn this greatness 'gainst her possible doom,
Lest tranced in dreams of far, earth-circling rule,
Her very vastness, wide, imperial power,
Do house a frailty that may thrust her down,
Crushed in ruin wide by her immense
Titan-like shoulders, whereon heavy, outspread,
God-like Responsibility ever broods,
Pondering on the miseries of this world.

Iron-welded, O my people, Saxon, Celt,
Victorious Northmen, strenuous, masterful,
Not to be strangled in time's ocean flood,
Sucked down in vortex of old ruin dire,
But to remain, contend, depose and rule,
Till earth's white morn outflames her latest night,
And freedom breaks in gold about the world.

This thine old spirit, mighty, undismayed,
High, self-sustaining, individual, free,
Protesting ever, fronting creeds of dark,
Denouncing ever the old despotic lie,
Rending the veils of doubt 'twixt God and man,
Reading the morning in the ancient stars,
And the mind's vastness in the spirit's wars.

From London's smoke of commerce blackening down,
Her mighty abbeys and her centuried town,
Her million toilers and her master minds,
Her fleets of commerce swept to every wind,
Whence went her myriads who in shores remote
Rebuilt her greatness, echoed her vast heart,
World-throbbing in its grim immensity,

To mighty vasts of lone Australian wilds
And bleak Canadian woods, the cradles grim
Of Saxon iron and of Celtic gold ;
Out round the world where'er blue ocean breaks,
'Mid temperate climes or fevered tropic lands,
Or Arctic wastes, her strong, indomitable sons
Do crush defeat and make this earth their own,
Determining all, moulding the world's best dream
Of strife and life and liberty of man.

From where soft-lipped, blue Mediterranean laves
In summer ripples Mediterranean strands,
To where iron-bound, fog-mantled Labrador
Juts out to lonely, lost Atlantean glooms,
The iron glove of empire, tempered, firm,
Doth hold in grasp the welfare of the world.
Quebec, Gibraltar, herculean gates,
Grim portals each of old and new world power,
Anchors of that vastness of her dream,
Reaching round the wide-ribbed, shouldered earth,
The shining ocean and the desert's span,
A power peace-yearning, glad, beneficent,
This younger Rome of this imperial day,
Beaconing liberty, conquering to redeem.

This her sole dream, look that she lose it not,
As tranced in toil, heavily-wheeled, she turns
Like some vast planet on its cloudward wing,
Callous of danger, strong in high resolve,
Half conscious of her might, fulfilling good,
Unto the conquering ultimate of her end.
Yea, not to praise, but rather to arraign,
Lest she in folly let her dream lie down,
And all her ancient, mighty power depart,
And all her majesty of light become
A ruined furnace from whose smouldering gleam

The younger nations haply steal a spark
To light their lesser, late decadent fires
Of national ardors: lest in her too credulous,
O'ermastering love of human liberty,
She let the evil in in guise of good,
The tyrant 'neath her freedom nurse his power
And suckle the serpent at her loyalty's breasts,
That ancient enemy of all her days,
To use her liberty to strike her down;

Lest she, forgetting how the fathers fought
And strove and lived and died for her great cause,
And in her dream of madness compromise
Her truth, her light, for fancied rule and power,
Where no power lies, no loyalty, but a cloak,
False and cunning, covering subtlest dream
To rise and rend her doth a danger come;

Lest she in all this greatness on her laid,
This earth-wide, vast, imperial mantle, stained
With blood of those who loved her, gave her all,
Not recking save that they did love her, died
That she might live, and spread that mantle vast
To outmost rim of despot-burdened earth:
Lest she 'mid all this pageant, glad, forget
Her one high dream: her steadfast sons forget,
On whom alone, in that inevitable hour,
Which comes alike to nations and to men,
True Britons, loyal, she may place her trust.

This my note in this imperial hour,
This high, auspicious, world-compelling day;
When cohorts from earth's alien peoples meet,
And East greets West in challenge, high, of power,
And all the world-wide splendor gathered far,
In tribute meet to earth's imperial king.

Yea, this my note, remembering empire's bounds
Not larger than the loyalty that upholds;
Not wider than the speech that makes us one;
Not greater than the pride of olden dreams,
Of common blood, of common faith and song.

For vain the splendor and the freedom vast,
And vain the iron power that makes it sure,
And vain the mighty toil that would endure
If love be not the anchor that withstands.

For earth is worn of conquest-sanguined states,
And bloody wars for base, material ends,
Of blatant voices calling unto strife:
Only the calm and patient will remain,
Only the noble effort will endure.

And he, Imperial Edward, august son
Of her who, gracious, noble, held so long
Her people's fealty: he who stands for all
This vast, earth-circling rule, beneficent,
This power that makes for freedom round the world,
Whose rule is one with those wise, ancient laws
Of mighty Alfred; that rare golden speech
Of Shakespeare made immortal, liberty
Loved of Scot and Saxon where'er wide
Love's golden bonds of kinship gird the world:—
Yea, he, our august monarch, may his rule
Be splendid, fruitful, may his days be spared
To golden out to mellowed olden age
To rule us happy, with his noble Queen.

And we, true steadfast Britons, severed wide,
Where ever Orient skies, hyperion star
Shine on the mighty pulsings of the world,
Keep we the loyalty to our speech and blood,
Brother with brother, kindred peoples set
About the base of one imperial throne.

Lake Lyrics

Vapor and Blue

DOMED with the azure of heaven,
Floored with a pavement of pearl,
Clothed all about with a brightness
Soft as the eyes of a girl,

Girt with a magical girdle,
Rimmed with a vapor of rest—
These are the inland waters,
These are the lakes of the west.

Voices of slumberous music,
Spirits of mist and of flame,
Moonlit memories left here
By gods who long ago came,

And vanishing left but an echo
In silence of moon-dim caves,
Where haze-wrapt the August night slumbers,
Or the wild heart of October raves.

Here where the jewels of nature
Are set in the light of God's smile,
Far from the world's wild throbbing,
I will stay me and rest me awhile.

And store in my heart old music,
Melodies gathered and sung
By the genies of love and of beauty
When the heart of the world was young.

The Children of the Foam

OUT forever and forever,
Where our tresses glint and shiver
 On the icy moonlit air;
Come we from a land of gloaming,
Children lost, forever homing,
 Never, never reaching there;
Ride we, ride we, ever faster,
Driven by our demon master,
 The wild wind in his despair.
Ride we, ride we, ever home,
Wan, white children of the foam.

In the wild October dawning,
When the heaven's angry awning
 Leans to lakeward, bleak and drear;
And along the black, wet ledges,
Under icy, caverned edges,
 Breaks the lake in maddened fear;
And the woods in shore are moaning;
Then you hear our weird intoning,
 Mad, late children of the year;
Ride we, ride we, ever home,
Lost, white children of the foam.

All grey day, the black sky under,
Where the beaches moan and thunder,
 Where the breakers spume and comb,
You may hear our riding, riding,
You may hear our voices chiding,
 Under glimmer, under gloam;
Like a far-off infant wailing,

You may hear our hailing, hailing,
For the voices of our home;
Ride we, ride we, ever home,
Haunted children of the foam.

And at midnight, when the glimmer
Of the moon grows dank and dimmer,
Then we lift our gleaming eyes;
Then you see our white arms tossing,
Our wan breasts the moon embossing,
Under gloom of lake and skies;
You may hear our mournful chanting,
And our voices haunting, haunting,
Through the night's mad melodies;
Riding, riding, ever home,
Wild, white children of the foam.

There, forever and forever,
Will no demon-hate dis sever
Peace and sleep and rest and dream;
There is neither fear nor fret there
When the tired children get there,
Only dews and pallid beam
Fall in gentle peace and sadness
Over long surecase of madness,
From hushed skies that gleam and gleam:
In the longed-for, sought-for home
Of the children of the foam.

There the streets are hushed and restful,
And of dreams is every breast full,
With the sleep that tired eyes wear;
There the city hath long quiet
From the madness and the riot,
From the failing hearts of care;

Balm of peacefulness ingliding,
Dream we through our riding, riding,
 As we homeward, homeward fare;
Riding, riding, ever home,
Wild, white children of the foam.

Under pallid moonlight beaming,
Under stars of midnight gleaming,
 And the ebon arch of night;
Round the rosy edge of morning,
You may hear our distant horning,
 You may mark our phantom flight;
Riding, riding, ever faster,
Driven by our demon master,
 Under darkness, under light;
Ride we, ride we, ever home,
Wild, white children of the foam.

How One Winter Came in the Lake Region

For weeks and weeks the autumn world stood still,
 Clothed in the shadow of a smoky haze;
The fields were dead, the wind had lost its will,
And all the lands were hushed by wood and hill,
 In those grey, withered days.

Behind a mist the bleary sun rose and set,
 At night the moon would nestle in a cloud;
The fisherman, a ghost, did cast his net;
The lake its shores forgot to chafe and fret,
 And hushed its caverns loud.

Far in the smoky woods the birds were mute,
 Save that from blackened tree a jay would
 scream,

Or far in swamps the lizard's lonesome lute
Would pipe in thirst, or by some gnarlèd root
The tree-toad trilled his dream.

From day to day still hushed the season's mood,
The streams stayed in their runnels shrunk and
dry;

Suns rose aghast by wave and shore and wood,
And all the world, with ominous silence, stood
In weird expectancy:

When one strange night the sun like blood went
down,

Flooding the heavens in a ruddy hue;
Red grew the lake, the sere fields parched and
brown,

Red grew the marshes where the creeks stole down,
But never a wind-breath blew.

That night I felt the winter in my veins,

A joyous tremor of the icy glow;
And woke to hear the north's wild vibrant strains,
While far and wide, by withered woods and plains,
Fast fell the driving snow.

On the Shore

(Age)

WITH golden spicèd dreams blows in the dawn,
About the cool blue bosom of the lake;

Far over wave and shore wild voices wake,
The watery curves and windy reeds upon,
Where the young glory of the day dreams on;
And wingèd creatures haunts of sleep forsake,
And dreams and silence their dim ways betake
Round the grey edge where lidded night hath gone.

Here all is young and glad, the laughing shore,
The sunshine, the glad birds, no memories
On haggard faces wistful to forget;
Save yon old man beside the rude hut door,
With palsied hands, chin bending to his knees,
Mending dead youth in meshes of a net.

The Winter Lakes

Out in a world of death far to the northward lying,
Under the sun and the moon, under the dusk and the
day;
Under the glimmer of stars and the purple of sunsets
dying,
Wan and waste and white, stretch the great lakes
away.

Never a bud of spring, never a laugh of summer,
Never a dream of love, never a song of bird;
But only the silence and white, the shores that grow
chiller and dumber,
Wherever the ice winds sob, and the griefs of winter
are heard.

Crags that are black and wet out of the grey lake
looming,
Under the sunset's flush and the pallid, faint glimmer
of dawn;
Shadowy, ghost-like shores, where midnight surfs are
booming
Thunders of wintry woe over the spaces wan.

Lands that loom like spectres, whited regions of winter,
Wastes of desolate woods, deserts of water and shore;

A world of winter and death, within these regions who
enter,

Lost to summer and life, go to return no more.

Moons that glimmer above, waters that lie white under,

Miles and miles of lake far out under the night;

Foaming crests of waves, surfs that shoreward thunder,

Shadowy shapes that flee, haunting the spaces white.

Lonely hidden bays, moon-lit, ice-rimmed, winding,

Fringed by forests and crags, haunted by shadowy
shores;

Hushed from the outward strife, where the mighty surf
is grinding

Death and hate on the rocks, as sandward and land-
ward it roars.

A Lake Memory

THE lake comes throbbing in with voice of pain

Across these flats, athwart the sunset's glow;

I see her face, I know her voice again,

Her lips, her breath, O God, as long ago.

To live the sweet past over I would fain,

As lives the day in the red sunset's fire,

That all these wild, wan marshlands now would stain,

With the dawn's memories, loves and flushed desire.

I call her back across the vanished years,

Nor vain—a white-armed phantom fills her place;

Its eyes the wind-blown sunset fires, its tears

This rain of spray that blows about my face.

The Flight of the Gulls

OUT over the spaces,
The sunny, blue places,
Of water and sky;
Where day on day merges
In nights that reel by;
Through calms and through surges,
Through stormings and lulls,
O, follow,
Follow,
The flight of the gulls.

With wheeling and reeling,
With skimming and stealing,
We wing with the wind,
Out over the heaving
Of grey waters, leaving
The lands far behind,
And dipping ships' hulls.
O, follow,
Follow,
The flight of the gulls.

Up over the thunder
Of reefs that lie under,
And dead sailors' graves;
Like snowflakes in summer,
Like blossoms in winter,
We float on the waves,
And the shore-tide that pulls.
O, follow,
Follow,
The flight of the gulls.

Would you know the wild vastness
Of the lakes in their fastness,
Their heaven's blue span;
Then come to this region,
From the dwellings of man.
Leave the life-care behind you,
That nature annuls,
And follow,
Follow,
The flight of the gulls.

How Spring Came

(To the Lake Region)

NO PASSIONATE cry came over the desolate places,
No answering call from iron-bound land to land;
But dawns and sunsets fell on mute, dead faces,
And noon and night death crept from strand to
strand.

Till love breathed out across the wasted reaches,
And dipped in rosy dawns from desolate deeps;
And woke with mystic songs the sullen beaches,
And flamed to life the pale, mute, death-like sleeps.

Then the warm south, with amorous breath inblowing,
Breathed soft o'er breast of wrinkled lake and mere;
And faces white from scorn of the north's snowing,
Now rosier grew to greet the kindling year.

Lake Huron

(October)

MILES and miles of lake and forest,
Miles and miles of sky and mist,
Marsh and shoreland where the rushes
Rustle, wind and water kissed;
Where the lake's great face is driving,
Driving, drifting into mist.

Miles and miles of crimson glories,
Autumn's wondrous fires ablaze;
Miles of shoreland red and golden,
Drifting into dream and haze;
Dreaming where the woods and vapors
Melt in myriad misty ways.

Miles and miles of lake and forest,
Miles and miles of sky and mist;
Wild birds calling where the rushes
Rustle, wind and water kissed;
Where the lake's great face is driving,
Driving, drifting into mist.

Sunset, Lake Huron

(September)

THE sunbeams fall in golden flakes,
Like snow-banks flamed the clouds are furled;
The soft light shakes
On wave that breaks
On wave, far round the gleaming world.

Great brown, bare rocks, wet, purple dyed,
By sunsets' beams, hedge in this realm
Of sky and wide,
Bleak sweep of tide,
Grey, tossed, scarce-plowed by keel or helm.

The east looms dark, the red day dips
Down under gleaming rock and wave,
In hushed eclipse,
While grey night slips
The cerements of her shrouded grave.

And buildeth up her arches dark,
From ruins of the dim dead day,
Till earth may mark
Each luminous spark,
Of stars that far in heaven stray.

And weaveth with her phantom hands
(Blind, dumb, save for the moon's white wreath,
And rude wind bands
From Eblis lands)
A shroud for the great lake beneath;

That beats and moans, a prisoned thing,
Rock-manacled beneath the night;
And tells each shore,
Forever more
Its sorrow in the pallid light.

Nama-Way-Qua-Donk—The Bay of Sturgeons

(Written in Boyhood)

Commonly known as Colpoy's Bay, an arm of the Georgian Bay. This is a beautiful sheet of water, nine miles long, surrounded by lofty cliffs of limestone, crowned by forests, once the haunt of a tribe of Indians called Petons, or "Tobacco Indians."

Medwayosh is a word of Ojibway origin, resembling the sound of the waves beating or washing on the shore.

COLD in the autumn night—
Sleeping with its waters bright,
Gilded by the moon's pale light,
Stretching to the northward white—
Rests the Bay of Sturgeons.

Huddled round it, sleeping soft,
Looming their great forms aloft
In the moonlight;

Bearded, grey, the great rocks stand
Silent, hushed, on either hand,
As if some dusky warrior band,
To-night, hushed, from the spirit land,
Came back once more.

Gliding here on either shore,
Lingering near the haunts of yore,
But to hear the waves once more
As in nights long, long before,
Whisper: Medwayosh.

'Towering stern, each blanket round,
Have the silent ages wound,
As they watched above each mound,

O'er the grave or battle-ground,
Where each warrior sleeps.

Once by these shores these warriors played,
Here lover bronzed and maiden strayed,
And as they parted coyly stayed
To plight their troth.

And oft when summer moons were young,
When swaying branches murmuring hung,
Whispered their loves in unknown tongue.
Oft in the autumn harvest feast,
Through purple mists from out the east,
They watched old Gheezis golden-fleeced,
Rise o'er the forest.

Here many a warrior sleeps below,
His place of rest full well they know,
Marked where the midday's glorious glow
Turns to the west.

The world of men may burn and burn,
But in these dreamy walls of fern,
Swathed in deep rest, they never turn.

Through the dim ages soft they sleep,
Wrapt in calm slumber, long and deep,
While Nepenthean dews their eyelids steep.

A wild, strange banquet long ago,
Whose lamps, in midst of festive glow
And mirthful sounds, burnt sudden low.

O sunsets old, long wandered down;
O ancient Indian shore and town,

Time's strange dark roll hath wrapt around
Thy dreamless sleep.

O saddest picture of a race—
A wild and passionate broken race—
That melting nightward leaves no trace,
No camp-fire on the sweet, loved face
Of their own land;
As shades that wander to their rest,
Toward those dim regions of the west
And setting sun.

.

No wonder that in sternest close
The last wild war-cry weirdly rose,
To break the settler's short repose
In midnight hour.

.

Sleep, sleep, by dreamy bank and stream;
Sleep through the dim year's afternoon;
Let no strange babblers break thy dream,
No softer, weaker voices wean
Thee from thy rest.

Sleep, sleep, by dreamy shore and glen;
Sleep on through murk, and mist, and moon,
Through the mad years of modern men,
While only dreams of cave and fen
Fill each wild breast.

67.



PS
8455
A6A17

Campbell, William Wilfred
Poems

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

ERINDALE COLLEGE LIBRARY

✓

UTL AT DOWNSVIEW



D RANGE BAY SHLF POS ITEM C
39 14 30 24 04 006 8